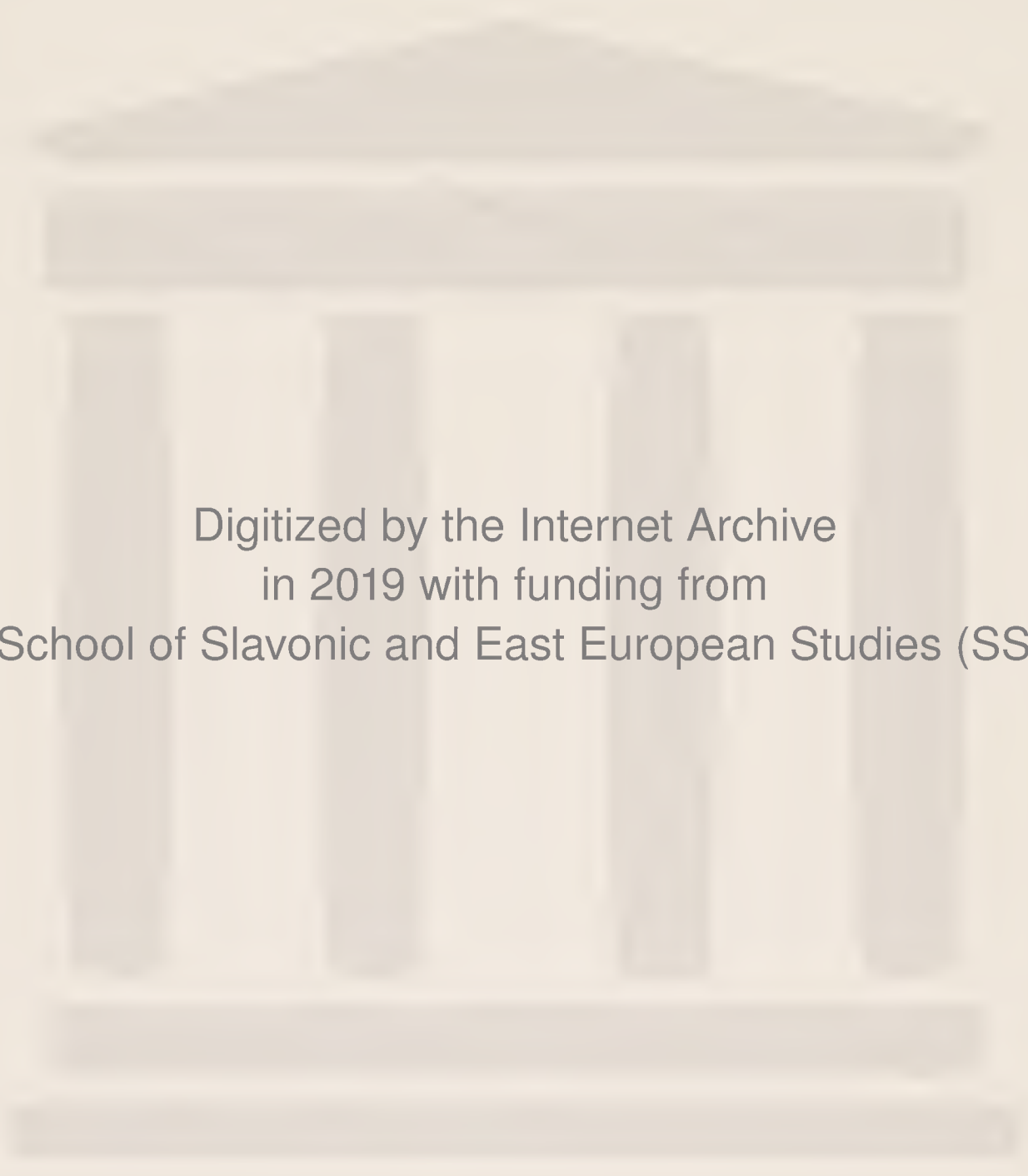


A CURIOUS AND NEW ACCOUNT OF MUSCOVY IN THE YEAR 1689

FOY DE LA NEUVILLE





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By FOY DE LA NEUVILLE

Edited and introduced by Lindsey Hughes
Translated from the French by J.A. Cutshall

School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University of London, 1994

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Occasional Papers No. 23

ISBN: 0 903425 34 3

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Preface

The text below is an unabridged translation of Pierre Aubouin's 1698 Paris edition of *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie*. Significant differences between this text and the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript *Relation curieuse de mon voyage en Moscovie de l'an 1689* and an untitled manuscript from the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek are indicated in footnotes, but we have not attempted to make an exhaustive comparison of the three texts. (An annotated edition of the French texts is in preparation by A.S. Lavrov at the University of St Petersburg.) Where Aubouin's edition contains an obvious misreading (for example, in the chapter on the first Crimean campaign the printer has skipped a line which appears in both of the manuscripts), the manuscript wording is substituted and the difference footnoted. A number of editorial insertions (mostly names and dates) have been made for the sake of clarity. These have been placed in square brackets.

As far as is possible, seventeenth-century French has been rendered into modern English. This has entailed taking certain liberties. For example, both the book and the manuscripts are only sparsely punctuated. Sentences are often a whole paragraph long, and many begin with a participle construction (eg 'The council of war having finished and the hetman having been placed under heavy guard ...'). For the sake of readability, long sentences have been divided and as much variety introduced into their structure as is consistent with preserving the meaning. No attempt has been made to reproduce the different registers of the three texts referred to (for example, the language of the Paris manuscript is more archaic than that of the other two). However, a number of rhetorical devices of the time, such as Neuville's famous list of epithets describing Muscovites, have been preserved. For a rendering of the text into seventeenth-century English, readers are referred to the British Library's copy of Edward Castle's edition of *An Account of Muscovy as it was in the year 1689* (London, 1699), which is, to the best of our knowledge, the only one available in this country.

Names of places and people and the Russian terms with which the text is dotted, have, where appropriate, been given their modern spellings. This is necessary for reasons of clarity. For example, the term *prikaz* (Russian for chancellery or office) variously appears in the manuscripts as 'Precache', 'Prekache' 'Precaz' and 'Prekeiz'. With the exception of some conventionally Anglicized personal names (Peter, Sophia), Russian names and words have been transliterated using a modified Library of Congress system (e.g. -yi and -ii at the end of names in the text are replaced by -y, hence Dolgoruky, Iury). In most circumstances, the

published French text garbles Russian words and names to a remarkable extent, while the manuscripts offer a phonetic or Polonized spelling. Master of the Household Tolochanov becomes, in the Paris and Hanover manuscripts, 'Talachanaw', but in the 1698 edition a barely recognisable 'Talakorou'. The placename Chernaia Dolina ('Black Valley') is 'Tehorna Doliva' in the Paris manuscript, 'Thorna-Doliva' in the Hanover version and 'Thorna-d'Oлива' in the 1698 edition. Names of Polish origin and other foreign names have been restored as far as possible to their original spelling. For example, Chancellor Oginski ('Ogwenski' in the manuscripts) becomes 'Oquenoki' in the 1698 edition. Those names which could not be traced have been footnoted accordingly.

Neuville uses a wide range of Western weights, measures and monetary units in explaining their Russian equivalents to his readers. In the late seventeenth century the French monetary system was based on the *livre*, which was composed of twenty *sous*. The *sou* was divided into four *liards*, in turn composed of four *deniers*. The highest-value gold coin was the *louis d'or*, worth either twenty-four or forty-eight *livres*. The highest-value silver coin, the *écu*, was worth either three or six *livres*. London 1699 does not translate *livre* (literally, a pound), but renders *écu* as 'crown', and *sou* as penny. Later in the text, Neuville states that a rouble was worth roughly five *livres*. The basic Russian unit of currency was the kopeck, which was further subdivided into two *dengas*. 100 kopecks equalled one rouble. (The fact that the modern kopeck has virtually disappeared from circulation as a result of inflation in Russia in the early 1990s makes the translator's task all the harder.) In order to preserve a sense of comparative values for readers who remember pre-decimalisation British coinage, we have preferred to translate *écu* as 'pound', *livre* as 'crown' and *sou* as 'shilling', even though in modern usage *sou* tends to denote a negligible sum. Neuville also refers to the ducat, a gold coin used in the territory of the Holy Roman Empire and worth about three roubles (or approximately fifteen *livres*).

Neuville uses both Russian and Western units of distance, often in a very approximate manner. For example, at one point, he mentions a distance of 'ten versts, or two German leagues'. In another place he refers to 'a verst or Italian half-mile'. In the seventeenth century the Russian verst (*versta*) was usually equal to 2.1336 kilometers, although from the eighteenth century onwards it had a value of only 1.06 kilometers. Probably the only reliable way for the reader to gain an idea of the distances involved is to consult a map.

Thanks are due to Professor Isabel de Madariaga, who presented a microfilm of the Paris MS, to Dr Anke Hölzer of the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, who supplied the Hanover text, to Roger Bartlett and Radojka Miljevic, who read our text, and especially to Alexander Lavrov,

for sharing his thoughts on Neuville and Russia in the 1680s. Any errors that remain are our own.

Lindsey Hughes
James Cutshall

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:

- BN: 'Relation curieuse et nouvelle de mon voyage en Moscovie de l'an 1689'. Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Département des Manuscrits, nouvelles acquisitions françaises, 5114.
- NLB: Untitled manuscript in the Leibniz papers of the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, Hanover. Handschriftenabteilung, Ms. XXXIII, 1750.
- 1698: *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie* par Foy de la Neuville, Paris, 1698.
- London, 1699: *An account of Muscovy, as it was in the year 1689*, London, 1699.
- Limonov: Iu.A. Limonov, ed., *Rossia XVI—XVII vv. glazami inostrantsev*, Leningrad, 1986.
- MERSH: *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, 46 vols, Gulf Breeze, 1976—1987 and supplements.
- SPb.: St Petersburg.

List of Illustrations

1. Princess Sophia Alekseevna, portrait with verses, engraved by Abraham Bloteling of Amsterdam, c. 1689 (nineteenth-century copy, author's collection)
2. Prince Vasily Golitsyn, engraved portrait by Leonty Tarasevich, c. 1687. (nineteenth-century copy, author's collection)
3. Tsars Ivan and Peter, from an engraving by Larmessen, c. 1685 (nineteenth-century copy, author's collection)
4. Peter I of Russia by Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1698 (Kensington Palace, London)
5. New Convent of the Maidens (Novodevichy), engraving by Picart, early eighteenth century (State Historical Museum, Moscow)
6. Title page of the first French edition of Neuville, Paris, 1698
7. First page of Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript *Relation curieuse de mon voyage en Moscovie de l'an 1689*

[Illustrations 6 and 7 are reproduced by permission of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, and Bibliothèque Nationale, respectively.]

Chronology of Events: 1689–90

1 July 1689	Neuville appointed envoy by King of Poland.
19	Leaves Warsaw.
10 August	Leaves Smolensk.
15+	Arrives Moscow. Spends a week under guard.
late August	First meeting with V.V. Golitsyn.
early Sept.	Second meeting with V.V. Golitsyn.
9 Sept.	Disgrace and exile of Golitsyn.
	Neuville reports that the tsars are absent from Moscow for six weeks after the 'revolution'. According to M.M. Bogoslovsky (<i>Materialy dlia biografii Petra I</i> , vol. 1, Moscow 1940, p. 95), their movements were as follows: 16 Sept. Peter to Aleksandrovscoe Sloboda; 23 Sept. returns to Trinity Monastery; 6 Oct. sets off for Moscow; ? Oct.–21 Nov. in Moscow, but with many day trips, e.g. 31 Oct. to Kolomenskoe, hence
1 Nov.	Tsars return to Moscow.
? Nov.	Meetings with B.A. Golitsyn, A.A. Matveev, E.I. Ukraintsev.
21	Neuville mentions tsars' departure on a pilgrimage [to St Sabbas Monastery].
27	And their return [via Preobrazhenskoe, where Peter remains until 7 Dec].
7 Dec.+	Dinner with Matveev.
10+	Meeting with B.A. Golitsyn, who informs him that audience with tsars impossible until Epiphany [6 Jan.]
14 Dec.	Announces plans for departure.
16	Leaves Moscow.
20	Arrives Smolensk.
3 Jan. 1690	Arrives Warsaw.

1690 events mentioned in the *Account*

28 Feb.	Birth of Tsarevich Aleksei Petrovich.
27 March	Death of Patriarch Joachim.
20 April	Death of Dauphine.

KEY

1 July — date given by Neuville in the text.

9 Sept.— date calculated from internal evidence and/or given in other sources.

INTRODUCTION

LINDSEY HUGHES

Foy de la Neuville's account of a visit to Russia in the summer and autumn of 1689, first published in Paris in 1698 under the title *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie* ('A Curious and New Account of Muscovy'), is one of the most interesting and controversial foreign sources on late seventeenth-century Russia. According to the evidence of his own text, Neuville left Warsaw on 19 July 1689, accredited by the king of Poland as an envoy to the Muscovite court. He travelled disguised as a Pole, because Frenchmen were unwelcome in Moscow as a result of humiliations suffered by a Russian diplomatic delegation to France in 1687. His mission was to collect information about the activities of envoys from Protestant Brandenburg-Prussia in Moscow, a topic on which his account manifestly fails to elaborate, except to claim that the envoys were attempting to undermine the Holy League by casting aspersions upon the integrity of Poland, Russia's ally. Instead of eavesdropping on Protestant intrigues, the Frenchman found himself confined to quarters for much of his visit to Moscow as a result of both local security and the 'revolution' in August–September which overthrew the regent Princess Sophia, half-sister of Peter I, and her chief minister Prince Vasily Golitsyn, consolidating the unopposed rule of Tsar Peter's supporters. Although he never obtained an audience with the tsars (at the time seventeen-year-old Peter was ruling jointly with his half-brother Ivan), Neuville gleaned useful information about recent history, palace politics, international relations and local customs from influential contacts in the Foreign Office and foreign community. He formed a poor opinion of the Russians, whom he described in one notorious passage as 'suspicious and mistrustful, cruel, sodomites, gluttons, misers, beggars and cowards',¹ and apparently he was not sorry to quit Moscow in mid-December and return to Warsaw early in January 1690. Evidently, he set about writing up his impressions shortly thereafter, but they did not appear in print until 1698.

¹ See p. 57, below.

Moscow in 1689

The Russia visited by Neuville late in 1689 was, to use a cliché, on the threshold of the 'Petrine revolution' which was to transform Russia's armed forces, government institutions and élite culture.² To use another hackneyed phrase, Russia was about to enter the modern world — the Western world of science, rationalism and secularism. The decades which preceded the 'revolution' have acquired their own historical label: they constituted an 'age of transition', when Peter's overt, often forced programme of modernization was heralded by more modest reforms and cautious contacts with the West. The notion of transition is a useful corrective to the overworked idea that Peter I transformed Russia from 'non-being into existence' and single-handedly destroyed old Russian traditions. Even Neuville, who took pains to flatter his French and Polish patrons with tales of Russian brutality and backwardness, observed signs of change and detected drops of Western culture in the ocean of Russian ignorance: the linguistic skills of young Andrei Matveev, French-style carriages, Prince Vasily Golitsyn's 'Italianiate' palace, not to mention the prince's ambitious schemes, discussed below, 'to place his country on the same footing as all the others'. By and large, though, Neuville shared the view handed down by generations of travellers, with whose works he was evidently familiar, that Russia was on the fringes of civilization, 'the most northern Region of Europe reputed civil'.³ This condescending attitude explains why Peter apparently disliked Neuville's work and why even recently it appeared in Russian with the more abusive criticisms excised.⁴

In fact, Neuville's very presence in Russia, along with the many other foreigners mentioned in his work, bears witness to the widening scope of Moscow's international relations. Since the Time of Troubles at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the country suffered social and economic collapse and the humiliation of invasion by Swedish and Polish troops, Muscovy had been restoring its armies and its self-respect, often with the help of foreign mercenaries. During the reign of Peter I's father, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich (1645–76), Russian power grew in proportion to Poland's decline. Victory in the Russo-Polish Thirteen Years' War (1654–67) allowed Moscow to retain Left Bank or Eastern Ukraine, together with Kiev. This gain was ratified by the 1686 Treaty of Moscow whereby Russia joined Poland, Austria and Venice in the Holy League against the Turks, whom King Jan Sobieski

² For background reading on Russia in the 1680s, see the Bibliography on p. 74.

³ J. Milton, *A Brief History of Moscovia and of the less-known Countries lying eastward of Russia as far as Cathay* [1682], London, 1929, p. 32.

⁴ See, for example, the Russian translation edited by Iu.A. Limonov, in *Rossia XVI–XVII vv. glazami inostrantsev*, Leningrad, 1986, which lacks the string of insults quoted above.

of Poland had put to flight outside Vienna in 1683. In the wake of this treaty, as Neuville notes, Russian envoys were sent to all the major European capitals in an attempt to enlist aid for the League. Thus, by the 1680s, all the leading European nations had to reckon with Russia, if only as a counterweight to more powerful neighbours.

Viewed from Paris, a stronger Russia was an annoyance. In the early 1680s France had done well out of the Turkish threat in the east, taking the opportunity to annex Strasbourg in 1681, while the Holy Roman Emperor was otherwise occupied, and Luxembourg in 1684. But the entry of Russia into the Holy League in 1686 brought indirect aid to France's Austrian enemy and increased harassment to France's secret friend, the sultan of Turkey. Russia's entry into the war coincided with Emperor Leopold's capture of Buda in September 1686, and may indirectly have contributed to the Austrians' victory over the Turks at Mohács in August 1687, and to their capture of Belgrade in September 1688. However, Russia's military potential was not as yet matched by diplomatic prowess. One can imagine the incredulity with which French ministers observed the arrival in France in 1687 of Prince Iakov Dolgoruky's embassy requesting aid for the Holy League. Russian diplomats still had to learn (and did so very fast later in Peter's reign) that the term 'all Christendom' meant little when territorial expansion and dynastic prestige were at stake and that it was quite possible for the Christian king of France to support the Turkish sultan against the Holy Roman Emperor.

Protestant powers like Brandenburg-Prussia, in alliance against France with Holland, Austria, Spain and Sweden in the War of the League of Augsburg (1686), courted Russia, obtaining agreements on trade and asylum for Huguenots early in 1689. Meanwhile, France was eager to estrange Poland from Brandenburg and to increase pressure on Austria by promoting the views of the 'French party' at the Polish court (Jan Sobieski was married to a French woman, Marie-Casimire de la Grange d'Arqien) to obtain Polish withdrawal from the war against the Turks and the Russian alliance. The German Baltic states were interested in expanding commercial ties with Russia, as was England, whose main efforts during this period were aimed at restoring valuable trade privileges rescinded by Russia in the 1640s on the pretext that the English had killed their lawful sovereign.⁵ The Dutch, who had done better than the English out of Russian trade since the 1650s, were the main spokesmen for the Protestant cause in Moscow, and anxious to counteract any concessions made to Catholics as a result of the Holy League alliance.

⁵ See L.A.J. Hughes, 'V.T. Postnikov's 1687 Mission to London: Anglo-Russian Relations in the 1680s in British sources', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 68 (1990), pp. 447-60.

The stated aim of Neuville's mission — to uncover Protestant intrigues — acknowledged Moscow as a scene of diplomatic interest. But Neuville himself tended to regard Russia from a Polish perspective, that is, with condescension and suspicion. His view of the effectiveness of Russian arms was dominated by disparaging accounts of Russian military failures in the Crimea in 1687 and 1689 obtained from his Polish contacts. These two campaigns, in which Prince Vasily Golitsyn led huge armies south through the steppe to within sight of the Crimea, but failed to win a decisive victory or to obtain any concessions from the Tatars, need to be put into perspective. The defence of southern borders against incursions by the Turks and Tatars was a major drain on Russian resources. It necessitated the costly maintenance of defence lines and forts and the allocation of scarce service lands and peasants to military servitors. Delicate relations had to be maintained with steppe nomads, such as the Kalmyks and Nogays, who on occasion would aid the Russian armies, and with the Cossacks of the Ukraine, especially the Sech (Camp) at Zaporozhie, which sometimes supported the Tatars or made overtures to the Poles. The tribute or 'gifts' still paid to the Tatars (an anachronism left over from the Mongol occupation of Russia, which had officially ended in 1480) were a symbolic annoyance, but the taking of slaves and sacking of villages in periodic Tatar raids were a real economic burden on Muscovy. The Treaty of Bakhchisarai between Russia, the Ottomans and the Crimea in 1681, after the Russo-Turkish wars of the 1670s, established an uneasy peace. But the Russians were prepared to break the peace in 1686 for the opportunity of securing their hold on the Ukraine by eliminating Polish claims to Kiev and stemming the Tatar threat by striking deep into Crimean territory. Far from being a foolhardy adventure, the campaigns combined long-standing Muscovite objectives with wider international commitments. Failure was caused more by faulty logistics than by military ineptitude or lack of courage. Contemporaries took a dim view of the exercise, however. When Neuville arrived in Moscow in 1689, the disaster of the second campaign was already having political repercussions, offering ammunition to opponents of the Sophia-Golitsyn regime.

As far as domestic politics are concerned, Neuville arrived at a particularly interesting moment. In April 1682 Tsar Aleksei's son Fedor (reigned 1676–82) had died without issue and the succession initially had been decided in favour of his half-brother Peter, then aged nine, son of Aleksei's second wife, Natalia Naryshkina, on the grounds that the claimant by seniority, sixteen-year-old Ivan, the son of Aleksei's first marriage, was mentally and physically handicapped. This decision prompted a rebellion on behalf of the usurped Ivan in which the long-standing grievances of the Moscow militia, the musketeers or *strel'tsy*, were harnessed to the interests of Ivan's supporters, headed by the relatives of his mother, the late Maria Miloslavskaia. Pre-eminent

among them was Ivan's sister, Sophia. After a revolt which culminated in a massacre of prominent Naryshkins and government officials in and around the Kremlin, at the end of May the Miloslavsky faction succeeded in ousting Peter's mother's relatives and having Ivan declared 'senior' tsar alongside Peter as 'junior', with Sophia as regent. Sophia emerged as ruler in spite of the Muscovite practice of secluding the daughters and wives of the élite, who spent much of their lives in the closed women's quarters or *terem*. The government was placed in the hands of Prince Vasily Golitsyn, a leading politician during Fedor's reign. Neuville describes all this, and the continuation of the troubles brought about by the dissident boyar Prince Ivan Khovansky, although, as will be discussed below and noted in the commentary to the text, chronology and details are often muddled.

When order was restored, the Sophia-Golitsyn government pursued an active foreign policy, crowned by the 1686 treaty with Poland. Peace was maintained with Sweden. There were trade agreements with Prussia. Border disputes with the Chinese brought war in the far east, and in the Treaty of Nerchinsk, signed in 1689, Moscow was forced to make territorial concessions. In social and economic matters the regime largely followed the path laid down in Tsar Aleksei's *Ulozhenie* or Law Code of 1649, which confirmed peasant bondage in perpetuity and defined the population's tax-paying liabilities and service duties on the basis of caste or estate. It may well be that Golitsyn had daring plans for reform, as detailed below, but he fell before he could implement them. Sophia's government preserved the status of the serf-owning nobility upon whom the army and civil service relied. They pursued and persecuted fugitive peasants and slaves and religious dissidents. The top military and civil posts remained in the hands of the boyar élite, several dozen leading families whose sons, barring accidents or disgrace, had hereditary claim to preferment. But there were notable exceptions, for example, the secretary Fedor Shaklovity, who rose from non-noble origins to head a government department.

There were more concrete achievements in the cultural sphere. Neuville mentions obliquely Russia's first institution of higher learning, the Slavonic-Greek-Latin Academy in Moscow, founded in 1687 with a curriculum based on Catholic models filtered through Orthodox Ukraine. The Ukraine and Poland strongly influenced new trends in Russian art, engraving, architecture and literature, producing the hybrid style later dubbed 'Moscow Baroque'. Golitsyn's house, which Neuville admired, was built in this style. The mansion typified the new demands for comfort and taste for Western trimmings. A small élite even craved French culinary dishes and confectionary, as Neuville discovered. Vasily Golitsyn owned foreign furniture and carriages, books in foreign languages, portraits of himself, his family and Russian and foreign

rulers. Golitsyn was a friend of foreigners, as Neuville notes, and remarkable among Russians for his tolerance of Catholics. Foreigners had been living and working in Russia in considerable numbers since the sixteenth century, but the 1680s saw some significant developments, notably the admission to Moscow, as a result of an agreement with Austria in 1684, of Jesuit priests. The Sophia-Golitsyn government sponsored foreign manufacturers, encouraged trade, and recruited craftsmen and other specialists. To this extent, it deserved its reputation for being relatively enlightened and tolerant.

Despite these modest achievements, when Neuville arrived in Moscow the regime was on the verge of collapse. All that was needed to topple it was a concerted effort from Peter's adherents, who had the moral and legal advantage that 'their' tsar was of age and, unlike Tsar Ivan, capable of ruling in his own right. Tensions over rewards lavished by Sophia on the heroes returning empty-handed from the Crimea culminated in a stand-off between Sophia's dwindling band of supporters in the Kremlin and Peter's weightier contingent in the Trinity monastery, which was swelled by foreign servicemen, the patriarch and most of the royal family. It was an unequal contest. At the beginning of September 1689 Sophia was locked up in a convent and Golitsyn and his immediate aides were banished to the far north. Neuville stayed long enough to see the new Naryshkin faction establish its own pecking order. Traditional Muscovite religious intolerance re-emerged as the patriarch was allowed to have his own way over foreign Catholics in Russia. Neuville believed that the 'Naraskins', as he called them, were doing irreparable damage to Russia. Little did he guess that in a few years' time and especially after the death of his mother in 1694, Peter, still an irresponsible adolescent in the Frenchman's eyes, would break loose from the tutelage of his relatives, restore the military prestige dented by the Crimean campaigns and go on to introduce some of the reforms which Neuville associated with Golitsyn and many more besides.

Who was Neuville?

Neuville's value as an observer is inextricably linked with his identity as a man, but establishing his credentials has proved difficult. In the past, doubts were expressed not only about whether the author had ever been in Russia (the suggestion that his book was a fabrication was first made shortly after its publication), but also about Neuville's very existence.⁶

⁶ See I. de Madariaga, 'Who was Foy de la Neuville?' (hereafter Madariaga), *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 28 (1987), pp. 21–30; A.S. Lavrov, "'Zapiski" de la Nevillia kak istochnik po istorii Rossii v poslednei chetverti XVII veka', *Materialy XXIV Vsesoiuznoi nauchnoi studencheskoi konferentsii 'Student i nauchno-tekhnicheskii progress'*. *Istoriia*, Novosibirsk, 1986, pp. 27–30; *idem*, "'Zapiski o Moskovii" de la Nevillia (preobrazovatel'nyi plan V.V.

The *Curious Account* was said to be an armchair compilation from the pen of the French scholar and bibliophile Adrien Baillet, who sometimes used the pseudonym Neuville but who had never set foot in Russia. It appears in certain listings as Baillet's work to the present day.⁷ There was nothing unusual or even particularly fraudulent about 'armchair' descriptions of Russia and other 'exotic' locations. Some, like John Milton's *A Brief History of Muscovy*, first published in 1682 and which was 'gathr'd from the Writings of several Eye-witnesses', made no claims to first-hand authenticity. Many scissors-and-paste fabrications are easily detectable because they draw, often word for word, on genuine travelogues, such as the early sixteenth-century account by the Austrian envoy Sigismund von Herberstein or the work of the seventeenth-century German scholar Adam Olearius (who himself borrowed from Herberstein).⁸ Neuville's text fits into neither of these categories. It deals with on-the-spot events in late 1689 rather than simply providing general information about the customs and manners of the Muscovites, which were passed on from one generation of travel writers to the next. (This is not to say that Neuville did not consult some written sources for his account, as will be discussed below.) It may be cross-referenced with other primary sources for the period which Neuville could not have known, such as the diary of General Patrick Gordon and the memoir of the boyar Boris Kurakin.⁹ In fact, the theory that the work is a fake creates many more problems than the supposition that this is a genuine traveller's account, made more rather than less authentic by all the inaccuracies and inconsistencies which one might expect from a non-professional writer visiting a country whose language and people he hardly knew.

The authenticity of Neuville's account is strengthened by the undoubted fact of his existence. Neuville's biography has yet to be written, the

Golitsyna i ego istochniki)', *Vestnik LGU. Seriya 2*, 1986, no. 4, pp. 88–91; "'Zapiski o Moskovii" de la Nevillia: avtor, rukopisi, pechatnoe izdanie' in *Kniga v Rossii XVI–serediny XIX v. Materialy i issledovaniia*, Leningrad, 1990, pp. 62–72; L.A.J. Hughes, *Sophia Regent of Russia 1657–1704*, New Haven and London, 1990 (hereafter Hughes, *Sophia*), pp. 264–65; F. Grönebaum, *Frankreich in Ost- und Nordeuropa*, Berlin, 1968.

One of the first formulations of the 'fabrication' theory was Lenglet de Fresnoy, *Methode pour étudier l'histoire avec un catalogue des principaux historiens et des remarques critiques sur la bonté de leurs ouvrages et sur le choix des meilleures éditions*, Paris, 1713, vol I, pp. 206, 230, 236. (Quoted in Lavrov, 'Zapiski' 1990.)

⁷ See F. Adelung, *Kritisch-literärliche Übersicht der Reisenden in Russland bis 1700*, SPb.-Leipzig, 1846, pp. 379–81; H.W. Nerhood, *To Russia and Return*, Ohio, 1968, p. 20.

⁸ On Herberstein's pervasive influence, see S.H. Baron, 'Herberstein's Image of Russia and its Transmission through later Writers', in S.H. Baron, *Explorations in Muscovite History*, London, 1991, no. XIII.

⁹ See note 54 below.

dates of his birth and death are still unknown, and there are several variations of his name (Neuville, Neufville, Neuille), but scattered sources allow a partial reconstruction of his activities in the years around 1689. In March 1725, for example, Mathieu Marais, a lawyer in the Paris Parliament, wrote to the president of the Parliament in Dijon that the death of the tsar had made him reread the *Curious Account*, which he found to contain some 'very interesting things'. Neuville, he went on to write, 'had been in Beauvais and was one of the greatest couriers and travellers that ever there was'. He rejects the dismissal of the work as a fake, points out the error of identifying Neuville with Baillet and adds that he knew a man in Beauvais who knew Neuville very well. 'His family name was Foy and this family still resides at Beauvais with honour.'¹⁰ Isabel de Madariaga tracked down references to Neuville in England, including evidence of a visit in October–December 1688, which corroborates Neuville's own mention of that visit in his *Account*, which refers to his arrest and the confiscation of his goods.¹¹ Neuville had carried out missions for the king of Poland before, as evidenced by a letter of August 1688 from the Marquis de Béthune, the French minister in Poland, reporting that Neuville went to England to deliver a letter from Jan Sobieski.¹² After his visit to Russia he again travelled round the courts of Europe (he was certainly 'well known' if not always 'well received', as he boasts in his dedication to the king of France). In early 1691 we find him in Hamburg on a mission carrying secret dispatches on treaties for Louis XIV, which unfortunately he lost.¹³

Madariaga loses track of Neuville in 1694, when he was apparently beaten up by some Poles for spreading gossip and slander. In fact, more evidence of his life appears after his death in the correspondence of the philosopher Gottfried von Leibniz. In January 1699 Nicholas Witsen of Amsterdam, who had visited and written about Russia and entertained Peter I in Holland, wrote to Leibniz saying that Neuville had been badly informed about many things in his book and that the Muscovite

¹⁰ *Journal et Mémoires de M. Marais*, Paris, 1853–68, quoted in A. Braudo, 'Russica. Iz dopolnenii k trudy Fr. Adelunga "Kritisch-Literärische Übersicht des Reisenden in Russland"', *Sbornik statei v chest' D.F. Kobeko*, SPb., 1903, p. 250. Beauvais is situated in the department of Oise, about 80 kilometers to the north of Paris.

¹¹ See Madariaga, p. 21, and *State Papers Domestic. James II. Vol. III. June 1687–February 1698*, London, 1973, items 2338 and 2372: passes issued to Yve, Sieur Bartholomew, Viscount de la Neufville, envoy from Poland, November 29 1688, 'to pass beyond the seas' (SP, 44/339, p. 34) and the same for 8 December, 1688 (ibid., p. 38). References to audiences in the *London Gazette*, 2389, 2390, 2393 (October 1688). For the reference to his arrest in the *Curious Account*, see below, p. 9.

¹² Madariaga, p. 22.

¹³ Ibid., p. 25.

ambassadors had complained about this.¹⁴ In a letter of April 1699 to the Swedish scholar Sparwenfeldt, Leibniz wrote: 'The book published by M. de la Neuville (who is dead) contains nothing in addition to the manuscript, except for the dedication to the king of France, which discloses the author's designs, and that he went to Moscow ostensibly as an envoy of Poland, but in fact as an emissary of France. Being involved in this at the same time as he [the king] was allied to the [Holy Roman] emperor tarnishes the memory of the late king of Poland. This supposes that M. de la Neuville was telling the truth, which is by no means certain for I have heard it said that he was something of a braggart.'¹⁵ As we shall see, Leibniz's manuscript of Neuville's work survived, although the exact circumstances of its acquisition remain unclear. Neuville had ample opportunity to meet Leibniz in Hanover, perhaps in 1690 on the visit mentioned at the beginning of the *Curious Account*, and again in 1691. Neuville's career continues to be pieced together. An autograph letter by Neuville was recently unearthed in the national archive in Paris.¹⁶

Although Neuville's existence is not in doubt, there is as yet no independent evidence of his visit to Moscow in Russian sources. It is possible to trace Neuville as far as Warsaw in 1689 through the instruction given to the French envoy Du Theil on 14 February that he was to go for Poland 'in the company of M. de la Neuville, who is in the capacity of envoy of the king in Poland' and a reference to a meeting there in April 1689.¹⁷ But for the crucial months of July to December 1689 the evidence is all Neuville's own. These obscurities are not surprising. For a start, no references are to be expected under the name Neuville, as he was apparently travelling incognito and does not reveal the name which he assumed. He was part of an unofficial delegation and was never received by the tsars. Moscow was in turmoil and many officials absconded to the Trinity Monastery where Tsar Peter fled in early August, thus normal standards of record-keeping lapsed. Neuville might be expected to have made contact with fellow-Catholics in Moscow, notably the Scottish mercenary Patrick Gordon, who was bound to be sympathetic to French plans to restore the Catholic king James II to the British throne. It has been suggested that they knew each other, but Gordon is not mentioned in Neuville's account nor, to the

¹⁴ V. Ger'e, *Otnosheniia Leibnitsa k Rossii i Petru Velikomu*, SPb., 1871, p. 32.

¹⁵ Letter to Johann Sparwenfeldt, 7 April 1699. V. Ger'e, *Sbornik pisem i memorialov Leibnitsa, otnosiashchikhsia k Rossii i Petru Velikomu*, SPb., 1873, no. 37. Quoted in Braudo, p. 250. On the manuscript, see below pp. xxiv.

¹⁶ Our thanks to Alexander Lavrov for information conveyed during a meeting in St Petersburg in September 1993. He is hopeful of other finds.

¹⁷ *Receuil des Instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France. Pologne*, vol. I, Paris, 1889, p. 189. (Madariaga, pp. 22–23.)

best of my knowledge, Neuville in Gordon's diary.¹⁸ But, again, this omission may be explained by circumstantial evidence. Gordon was on active service in the south, on his way home from the second Crimean campaign, during most of the period when Neuville was in Moscow, and based with Tsar Peter's court at the Trinity Monastery from early September. Another Catholic contact, Paul Menzies, whom Neuville met in Smolensk at the beginning of his journey and later in Moscow, provides no direct corroboration, although Neuville's information about Menzies appears to have been obtained from the man himself.¹⁹

The evidence of Neuville's visit to Moscow is also obscured by the disguises which he adopted, even though some people, such as the Dutch ambassador, apparently saw through them. It has been suggested that he was playing a double bluff, not just as a Frenchman pretending to be a Pole, but also acting as agent of the Society of Jesus on a Jesuit mission. The Soviet commentator Iu.A. Limonov believed that Neuville *was* a Jesuit, whose report about Russia was intended as much for the Society of Jesus as for the kings of Poland or France.²⁰ Limonov's arguments for this claim are not very well developed. Indeed, he appears to be under the misapprehension that Patrick Gordon and Paul Menzies were also Jesuits, on the grounds that they had studied at Jesuit colleges, Gordon at Braunsberg, near Königsberg, and Menzies at Douai in France. If it cannot be shown that Neuville was a Jesuit, however, it is evident that he had Jesuit sympathies. There is a hypothesis that Neuville's 'eulogy' to Vasily Golitsyn and his far-sightedness²¹ may have been written in fulfilment of a pledge made by the Jesuit father Johannes Schmidt, who was allowed to come to Moscow in 1684 to serve the small foreign Catholic community as a result of the agreement made by Golitsyn with the Viennese court.²² In 1686 Schmidt was replaced by the Bohemian Jesuit Georgius David, and thus did not have time to carry out his promise to 'praise Golitsyn by all the means at his disposal.'²³ Perhaps Neuville corrected the omission on his behalf.

18 Thanks to Graeme Herd, King's College, London, for confirming the absence of an obvious reference in the Gordon papers at his disposal.

19 See below, pp. 6-7.

20 Limonov, p. 15. Lavrov independently endorses this view, with more substance, 'Zapiski', Novosibirsk, 1986, p. 29.

21 See Lavrov, 'Zapiski', LGU, 1986. Also L.A.J. Hughes, *Russia and the West: Prince Vasily Vasil'evich Golitsyn (1643-1714)*, Newtonville, Mass., 1984 (hereafter Hughes, *Russia and the West*), and A.F. Smith 'Prince V.V. Golitsyn: the Life of an Aristocrat in Muscovite Russia', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Harvard, 1987.

22 On improved conditions for Catholics during Sophia's regency, within the context of Russia's foreign policy, see Hughes, *Sophia*, pp. 125-26.

23 Lavrov, 'Zapiski', LGU, 1986, p. 89; *idem*, 'Zapiski', Novosibirsk, 1986, p. 29.

Whatever Neuville's links with the Society of Jesus, his *Account* would have been of little value to the Jesuits, providing far less new information on religious matters than Georgius David's work on Russia. Neuville mentions the expulsion from Moscow in October 1689 of David and his companion Tobias Tichavski, but makes no reference to meeting them.²⁴ Still, the link merits further exploration. There are some intriguing points of contact. David, for example, had dealings with the Moldavian Nikolai Spafarius (1636–1708), Neuville's chief informant in the Foreign Office, from whom he, like Neuville, received information, including cartographic material, about routes to China through Siberia.²⁵ This was a subject of particular interest to Jesuit missionaries. Intriguing threads also link Neuville and Spafarius with Leibniz. Spafarius's 'Description of China' was known both to Leibniz and to the Swedish scholar Sparwenfeldt, who was in Russia in 1684–87 and had a copy of the work made.²⁶ Neuville does not mention Spafarius's account as such, but makes several references to his journey to China in the final chapter of his work. Evidently Neuville and his work form part of a complex network of links between Russia and the outside world, the details of which have still to be established. Neuville's existence cannot be doubted, but his own text still provides the best evidence of his character.

A Curious Account: the text

The history of the text is almost as elusive as the biography of the author. The first (1698) and subsequent editions of the book centre on the first-hand account of Neuville's journey from July 1689 to January 1690, with historical interpolations, mainly on the period 1682–89, and background information about customs, religion, trade and geography. Repetitions (e.g. about Shaklovity in chapters 3 and 6) indicate that several texts were incorporated into the final version. References to events postdating Neuville's departure from Moscow in December 1689 include the birth of Tsarevich Aleksei 'last February', the refusal 'last March, 1690' of passage to China for the Jesuit Father Grimaldy, and the death of Patriarch Joachim, 'the one in office last year and who is now dead' (*qui est mort présentement*). The Russian scholar A.S. Lavrov concludes the original was a series of notes or diary entries variously and not consistently updated.²⁷ There are no references to historical events between 1690 and the publication of the book in 1698,

²⁴ The act of expulsion is in *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii*, III, SPb, 1830, no. 1351, pp. 39–40.

²⁵ Georgius David, *Status Modernus Magnae Russiae seu Moscoviae* (1690), ed. A.V. Florovskij, The Hague, 1965, p. 20.

²⁶ D.T. Ursul, *Nikolai Milesku Spafarii*, Kishinev, 1985, pp. 91–92.

²⁷ Lavrov, 'Zapiski', *LGU*, 1986, pp. 29–30.

but, as discussed below, there are some quotations from Philippe Avril's account of his travels, first published in 1691.

Three manuscript versions of Neuville's work have come to light, one in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and two in the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek in Hanover, the latter from the papers of Leibniz.²⁸ (The second Hanover MS is an incomplete copy of the first. All subsequent references to Hanover are to the first MS.) None of these MSS is identical with the text of *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie* (Paris, 1698). The Paris edition is longer, differing from the manuscripts mainly by a large number of interpolations, usually speculating on the motives of the principal actors in the story but never adding new factual information to that found in the manuscripts. In addition, a number of important comments, notably those on personalities, appear as marginal notes in the manuscripts but are incorporated into the text of Paris 1698.

The Hanover MS is slightly closer to the published text in content and in spelling than the Paris version, and has the same chapter headings. But the Paris manuscript has a whole chapter (the dedication to King Louis XIV) that is missing from the Hanover manuscript. Both Paris and Hanover MSS have almost identical marginal insertions. Lavrov thinks that it was the complete Hanover MS to which Leibniz referred when he wrote in April 1699 that the book contained 'nothing in addition to the manuscript, except for the dedication to the king of France'.²⁹ In fact, there are considerable difference and additions, as noted above and below.

Lavrov views the Paris MS as a new, corrected edition of an earlier, non-extant manuscript, amended to make it more suitable for presentation to the king, by adding the dedication and changing some passages to play down the Polish slant of Neuville's mission.³⁰ The typesetters' text has not survived but evidently was not a simple copy of either the Paris or Hanover MSS. Lavrov believes that the Paris manuscript represents the 'author's last wishes', but that the amendments and inserts in the 1698 edition may have been added by someone else, to bring the book 'more into line with the tastes of the general reader' (for

28 'Relation curieuse et nouvelle de mon voyage en Moscovie de l'an 1689', Département des Manuscrits, nouvelles acquisitions françaises, 5114. Ibid., Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, Handschriftenabteilung, Ms. XXXIII, 1750 and 1750(a). The second Hanover MS, 1750(a), breaks off in the chapter on the 1689 Crimean campaign. (See Lavrov, 'Zapiski', 1990, pp. 66–67.) Microfilm copies of Hanover and Paris MSS and Paris 1698 are held in the Library of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London. The British Library has the 1699 Hague edition, but lacks 1698.

29 See above, note 15.

30 Lavrov, 'Zapiski', 1990, p. 68.

example, by providing more speculation on motivation and intrigues).³¹ The published book also acquired a new title, which may, as Lavrov points out, be borrowed from earlier works, for example the French translation of Samuel Collins *The Present State of Russia* (1671).³²

It is idle to speculate whether the Paris or Hanover MS is the earlier. The fact that neither can have been written before 1691 (both contain the material borrowed from a book by the Jesuit Philippe Avril, first published in that year)³³ suggests that there were earlier, perhaps rather shorter manuscripts which have since been lost. There is a clear distinction in the text between those things which Neuville had seen for himself, those he could have been told of by Spafarius or Matveev, and those which rehearse conventional knowledge of Russia. It appears fairly certain that neither manuscript derives directly from the other. Overall, the wording and spelling of the Hanover manuscript is closer to that of the published version than that of the Paris manuscript, but there are points at which the 1698 edition follows the Paris MS instead. Lavrov speculates that the appended dedication to Louis XIV means that the Paris MS is later than the Hanover version, but this is not necessarily so. The most logical assumption may well be that Neuville produced (or, more probably, had scribes produce) two slightly different manuscripts of his work for slightly different purposes. If Neuville decided to send a copy of his account to someone in Hanover, he would hardly have admitted to having spied on Hanover for Louis XIV's agent, the Marquis de Béthune. The dedication to the French king contains just such an admission. Equally significantly, the only reference to the Marquis de Béthune elsewhere in the text (in the account of Neuville's journey) is also excised from the Hanover MS. It may be that the account was produced for Leibniz himself, perhaps as a result of one of the visits we know that Neuville made to Hanover, ostensibly as the envoy of the king of Poland. By the same token, in the manuscript which Neuville gave to Louis XIV,³⁴ probably in the hope of preferment, Neuville's actions in the king of France's interests are given prominence. The reference to the 'glory and renown' of Louis' arms, and 'his part in deciding the fate of Europe', suggest that the dedication was written at the beginning of the 1690s rather than the end, when the peace of Ryswik in 1697 was concluded to France's disadvantage.

31 Ibid., p. 72. *Idem*, "'Zapiski o Moskovii" de la Nevillia vo Frantsii i v Rossii XVIII v.' in *Kniga v Rossii. Vek Prosveshcheniia*, Leningrad, 1990, pp. 100–01.

32 One may also note an armchair compilation which appeared in Paris in 1687 under the title *Relation de tout ce qui regarde la Moscovie*.

33 See p. xxvii below.

34 There is every reason to suppose that the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript is just that, which would explain both why it is a clean copy (cleaner than Hanover, which has crossings out) and how it came to form part of the French national collection.

If the above is true, there must certainly have been other manuscripts of Neuville's account, including that from which the printed version was prepared. It is, of course, impossible to know whether the numerous additions to that text were Neuville's own attempts to make his work more palatable to the public, or the work of his editor. Leibniz's mention of Neuville's death in 1699 need not preclude his having worked on the published version. The royal licence in the 1698 edition, given to Paris bookseller and printer Pierre Aubouin on 16 August 1697, shows that the first printing was completed on 5 October 1697. The only reason to doubt that Neuville was alive when it was being prepared are the wildly inaccurate spellings of proper names which appear in the published version, which render some of the already erratically spelt versions in the MSS almost incomprehensible.³⁵

Both published and MSS versions combine Neuville's own first-hand material with information gleaned from acknowledged informants on the spot. The most useful, Spafarius, even had the final chapter dedicated to 'gleanings' from Neuville's conversations with him, although Neuville complains about Spafarius's reluctance to give details. Another foreign contact, as mentioned earlier, was the Scottish mercenary Paul Menzies, whose adventures Neuville relates in chapter 2. The detailed and largely accurate accounts of the Crimean campaigns came from Poles on the spot. His best Russian contact was Andrei Artamonovich Matveev (1666–1728) (who appears as 'Harthemonovvich' in the MSS, 'Harthemonnerrich' in the 1698 text). Matveev was an early 'Westernist', with a Scottish mother and a father, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's former favourite Artamon Sergeevich Matveev, who was ahead of his time in hiring foreign tutors for his son. (One of them was Spafarius, which provides another link in the network of acquaintances). His father's violent death at the hands of the musketeers in 1682 had embittered Andrei against the Miloslavsky clan, whom he held responsible. He subsequently did his utmost to blacken Sophia's reputation, in his memoirs written in the 1720s, and, we may assume, orally to such acquaintances as Neuville.³⁶ He was, however, sympathetic towards Vasily Golitsyn, in whose chancellery he had worked as an interpreter. Neuville describes Matveev as 'very witty, speaks good Latin, enjoys reading, is delighted to hear news of what is going on in Europe, and has a particular liking for foreigners'. Prince Boris Golitsyn also furnished Neuville with gossip from the palace, and may well have influenced Neuville's negative view of the Naryshkins (Golitsyn's rivals for Peter's favour) and his vicious portrait of Sophia.

³⁵ See Preface.

³⁶ Andrei Matveev, 'Zapiski', in N. Sakharov, ed., *Zapiski russkikh liudei. Sobytiia vremeni Petra Velikogo*, SPb., 1841.

There is also material from published works. In the surviving manuscripts there are at least two borrowings from the Jesuit Philippe Avril's *Journey through several countries of Europe and Asia undertaken in order to find a new route to China*, first published in French in 1691.³⁷ One, in chapter 9, is a short description of the 'great bell' in the Kremlin. The other, more lengthy, is the description in the following chapter of the Russians' method of hunting Siberian marten. Perhaps not surprisingly, the latter, obvious piece of plagiarism is bowdlerized in the 1698 edition. Neuville may also have been influenced by Avril's high opinion of Vasily Golitsyn.³⁸ But Avril was not the source of the details of Neuville's negative portrait of Sophia, about whom Avril said little, promising more on her 'diverse intrigues' in a sequel on the 'temporal and spiritual state of Muscovy', which he never completed.³⁹ Neither is it likely to have been the king of Denmark's agent Heinrich Butenant (referred to as the 'Danish commissioner' in Neuville's text). Butenant's eye-witness account of the musketeer revolt of 1682, first published in German in 1682, and reissued in 1691, does not dwell on Sophia's intrigues (although it pronounces her to be 'a very clever lady'), and contains information on the social origins of the rebellion missing from Neuville.⁴⁰ A more likely source for Sophia's machinations is the German traveller Georg Adam Schleissing, whose account of his stay in Russia in 1684–86 appeared in various versions and under different titles from 1688.⁴¹ Reworkings in the 1690s produced a portrait of unscrupulous ambition and intrigue. Neuville may well have had access to them.

Another possible source for the 1682 rebellion is an anonymous Polish account. It was not actually published until 1901, but Neuville could have met its author or seen the manuscript in Poland. This is suggested by his reference to the outburst by Sophia at Fedor's funeral ('The princess's ambition did not allow her to hide her chagrin for long. In an outburst she publicly opposed Peter's coronation'), for which the Polish

³⁷ P. Avril, *Voyage en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie entrepris pour découvrir un nouveau chemin à la Chine*, Paris, 1691, reprinted 1692. An English translation was published in London in 1693 under the title *Travels into divers Parts of Europe and Asia*.

³⁸ See below, p. 48, note 142.

³⁹ P. Avril, *Voyage en divers états*, Paris, 1692, pp. 314–15.

⁴⁰ H. Butenant, *Eigentlicher Bericht wegen des in Stadt Moskau am 15/16 und 17 May Anno 1682 entstandenen greulichen Tumults und grausamen Massacre*, Hamburg, 1682. See J. Keep, 'Mutiny in Moscow 1682: A Contemporary Account' in *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 23 (1981), pp. 410–42.

⁴¹ *Anatomiae Russiae deformatae, oder historische Beschreibung der Moskowiter oder Reusslandts* (1688); *Neu-entdecktes Sibyrien*, Jena, 1690; *Neu-entdecktes Sieweria*, Danzig, 1692, etc. For a discussion of these and a MS version of 1687, see L.A.J. Hughes, "'Ambitious and daring above her sex": Tsarevna Sophia Alekseevna (1657–1704) in Foreigners' Accounts', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 21 (1988), pp. 76–77.

account is the only other source.⁴² Andrei Matveev provides a link between the two authors: he is referred to in the closing lines of the Polish manuscript as a student of Polish, Latin and German, and as a potential tutor to Tsar Peter.

The most obviously derivative section of Neuville's work is the one on the morals, manners and religion of the Muscovites, which echoes accounts going back to that of Sigismund von Herberstein, first published in 1547. All travellers to Russia, it seems, described bath-houses, wife-beating, drunkenness, dreadful roads and poor hygiene. As noted by Samuel Baron, Herberstein's case for the 'debasement of the Muscovite' listed cowardice in war, dishonesty in commercial affairs, ill-treatment of women and preference for slavery over freedom. Readers of Neuville will immediately spot the similarity. Emelian Ukraintsev, for example, 'had little talent for war, and as such was a true Muscovite. He panicked so much that he could not resist the enemy's efforts.' This is not to say that Neuville borrowed directly from Herberstein. As Baron illustrates, Herberstein's observations were passed on through several generations of travel writers, including those like Adam Olearius (another possible indirect source for Neuville) who knew Russia well, but found that Herberstein had said it all before, so acknowledged him accordingly.⁴³

The published text of *A Curious Account* and the original, whatever form it took, were separated by less than a decade, but from a Russian viewpoint they belong to different eras. In 1689 Russia was a junior partner in the Holy League, ruled by an adolescent and an invalid. Twice Russian troops had failed to make any impression on the Tatars in campaigns to the Crimea. In 1689 new restrictions were placed on foreigners in Russia. Neuville, as we know, made pessimist predictions about Russia's future under the 'Naraskins'. By 1698 not only had Peter I, now ruler in his own right, captured the southern port of Azov from the Turks (in 1696) but he himself was in Europe, leaving Moscow in March 1697 to great advance publicity despite his official incognito. Foreign specialists were being hired in large numbers by Peter and his agents. Young Russians had been dispatched to study abroad. It was almost certainly the Grand Embassy of 1697–98 which prompted the publication of Neuville's account and stimulated new works on Russia, even though on this occasion the tsar did not visit France. What is striking is that there are no updates to the text to reflect Russia's new status or Peter's growing reputation. Neuville's account was out of date before it was published, but this did not prevent another French edition

⁴² See *Dnevnik zverskogo izbieniia moskovskikh boiar v stolitse v 1682 godu i izbraniia dvukh tsarei Petra i Ioanna*, SPb., 1901, and discussion in Hughes, 'Ambitious and daring', pp. 71–72.

⁴³ See Baron, 'Herberstein's Image of Russia'.

appearing in the Hague in 1699, an English translation in the same year and Dutch translations soon after.⁴⁴ The first review appeared in 1699.⁴⁵ Thereafter Neuville was quoted or served as an unacknowledged source for numerous works on Russia. Voltaire, for example, draws directly on Neuville's work in his *History of the Russian Empire under Peter the Great*, first published in 1763, citing Neuville's allegation that Sophia was planning to murder Peter (which Voltaire endorses) and his information about Golitsyn's sentence.⁴⁶

The work's impact in Russia was less immediate. It is said to have been banned there because it 'aroused the annoyance of Peter and his companions', a point endorsed by Witsen in the letter quoted earlier.⁴⁷ This is slightly puzzling: Neuville's depiction of Sophia's character and his interpretation of her motives should have pleased Peter, who tried in vain after the musketeer rebellion of 1698 to find direct evidence of her initiation of a plot against his life. On the other hand, the Frenchman's admiration for Vasily Golitsyn, with whom Peter was never reconciled (the prince remained in exile until his death in 1714) and his low opinion of Russians in general, including Peter himself (see below), were probably more persuasive. Still, the book got into Russian hands, especially of those who travelled abroad. Echoes are found in Andrei Matveev's 'History of the Musketeer Rebellion', written some time after 1718, and probably after Peter's death at the request of Peter Shafirov, whom Empress Catherine I asked to compile a history of Peter's reign. For example, Matveev's remark that Sophia employed 'the most profound Italian politics, where a person says one thing but really means another', recalls Neuville's reference to Machiavelli.⁴⁸ Matveev's library contained a copy of the 1707 Dutch Utrecht edition of Neuville's work, and almost certainly he would have had access to the first or second (Hague) French editions when he arrived in Holland as ambassador in 1700.⁴⁹ A translation for the educated Russian reading public appeared, censored, only in 1841, based on the 1699 *English* edition. A fuller version made from the French came out in 1891.⁵⁰

44 See p. 73 for bibliographical details.

45 *Journal des sçavans*, Amsterdam, vol. 26 (June 1699), pp. 416–21.

46 Voltaire, *Histoire de l'Empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand*, vol. I, Paris, 1834, pp. 112–13. See p. 44, note 128, below.

47 Lavrov, 'Zapiski', *Kniga v Rossii. Vek Prosveshcheniia*, p. 101. Johann Korb's work suffered a similar fate.

48 A.A. Matveev, 'Zapiski', p. 31. See discussion of this work in Hughes, *Sophia*, p. 30. For the Machiavelli quotation, see below, pp. xxxii and 47. It appears only in the published version of Neuville.

49 *Biblioteka A.A. Matveeva (1666–1728). Katalog*, Moscow, 1985, no. 390.

50 'Zapiski o Moskovii', *Russkii vestnik*, 1841, vol. 4, no. 9, no. 10 [transl. from the *English* version by N.A. Polevoi]; 'Zapiski de la Nevillia o Moskovii, 1689', *Russkaia starina*, 1891, no. 9, pp. 419–50, no. 11, pp. 241–81 [by A.I. Braudo].

Once he was more generally known in Russia, Neuville provided a staple source for a variety of works on the late seventeenth century, including Musorgsky's opera *Khovanshchina* and Aleksei Tolstoy's historical novel *Peter I*. He has been used both by distinguished Russian historians, such as S.M. Solov'ev, who quotes him as a reliable source, and by the authors of historical romance, who relish the details of the affair between Sophia and Golitsyn and other dubious goings-on in the palace.

A Frenchman's view of Russia

Neuville's view of Russia derives in part from his own experiences, allegiances and contacts, to a lesser extent from the inherited conventions of foreign accounts of Russia which, as noted earlier, usually included a number of set-piece insults. For example, Peter's maternal relatives, the Naryshkins, are described as 'true Muscovites' in their 'brutality', but Neuville's attitude was also coloured by his acquaintance with Prince Boris Golitsyn and his admiration for the latter's cousin, Prince Vasily Golitsyn, the head of Sophia's party. The Frenchman's antipathy towards Peter's relatives was exacerbated by a series of anti-foreign measures implemented after Sophia's overthrow, apparently with the blessing of the Naryshkin 'camp'. They included the expulsion of two Jesuit priests from Moscow and restrictions on worship by Catholics. As he writes: 'Those who most rejoiced at the elder Golitsyn's disgrace are today well aware of their loss, for the Naryshkins who now govern them are ignorant and brutal in equal measure and are starting, against the laws of politics and good sense, to destroy everything which that great man did with intelligence and sound judgement for the glory and advantage of the nation.' His evidence is a useful counterweight against the inaccurate view that 1689 marks the beginning of Peter's reign proper and of his reform programme. It is also significant for what it omits, for the restrictions on foreigners were almost certainly imposed on the initiative of the ultra-conservative Patriarch Joachim, well-known for his outbursts against 'heretics', rather than by the Naryshkins. The patriarch is barely mentioned, and then usually in neutral terms, whereas it was he and his circle who was the real foes of Catholics in Russia, as Georgius David, one of the Jesuits expelled in 1689, well understood.⁵¹ Neuville's failure to understand Joachim's role is curious, and may well be indirect evidence of the fact that Neuville and David never met.

On Peter, Neuville has comparatively little to say, rightly attributing little or no personal initiative in politics to the tsar during the period in question. There is a hint of the tsar's future stature in the remark (in

⁵¹ David, *Status Modernus*, p. 71, lists 'the animosity of the patriarch' as one of the main reasons for their expulsion.

chapter 2) that 'the liveliness of his mind might lead one to hope that he could do great things if he were well advised', which may have come from Matveev, but this initially favourable impression is undermined later on in the text, where Neuville remarks that the tsar's 'only merit is cruelty' and later still when Peter is portrayed as an unruly teenager, who enjoyed watching his favourites knocking themselves out in games of tug o'war, forced fat people to drive sledges over weak patches in the ice so that they fell in, loved to ring the 'great bell' and to watch houses burn down. (None of these observations, incidentally, are at variance with Peter's well-attested taste for the bizarre and uncouth.) In the MSS the fullest description of the tsar appears as a marginal note: 'He is very tall and quite well proportioned, with a handsome face. His eyes are big but so wild that he is pitiful to look at. His head shakes continually. He is twenty years of age.' Neuville probably never saw and certainly never met Peter, so had to get his information second-hand, perhaps from foreigners. (It is hard to imagine Andrei Matveev or Boris Golitsyn making disparaging remarks about Peter in Neuville's presence.) The dismissive portrait of Peter fitted the conventional view of 'barbarous' Russia, which would have been well received in France when the book was first published. Neuville can hardly be chastised for failing to detect the seeds of future 'greatness' which biographers later claimed Peter displayed from the cradle. At the same time, his portrait is far less vindictive than that of the Austrian envoy Johann Korb, copies of whose book, first published in Latin in 1700, were destroyed at Peter's insistence.⁵²

If Neuville failed to contribute to the later Petrine cult, he has a lot to answer for when it comes to the image of Sophia created for posterity, both her 'Machiavellian' intrigues and the much-quoted portrait of a woman 'monstrously fat, with a head as big as a bushel, a hairy face and carbuncles on her legs'. Peter's biographer R.K. Massie, who makes much use of Neuville, comments that this was 'one of the most ungallant descriptions of a lady ever offered by a man — certainly by a Frenchman.'⁵³ The description appears as a marginal note in the MSS. Perhaps it was furnished at some drunken session by either Andrei Matveev or Boris Golitsyn, neither of whom had any reason to wish to flatter Sophia. Matveev's father, as we know, was slaughtered during the musketeer revolt of May 1682 and young Matveev was in fear of his life. The portrait offered in his own memoir is just as damning as Neuville's, although he never refers to Sophia's outward appearance. Boris Golitsyn had a reputation for being crude and ill-mannered. (See,

⁵² See J-G. Korb, *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation at the Court of Czar Peter the Great*, transl. and ed. Count Mac Donnell, 2 vols, London, 1863/1968. Korb dwelt in particular on the cruelties of the trial and execution of the musketeers in 1698–99.

⁵³ R.K. Massie, *Peter the Great. His Life and World*, London, 1981, p. 79.

for example, Boris Kurakin's comments.)⁵⁴ Whatever its source, the vision of Sophia's ugliness and hairy face, found only in Neuville, became common currency. A reference to Peter's 'rather masculine and hirsute sister' in so recent a publication as the *Dictionary of English and European History* is one of its many progeny.⁵⁵

Neuville's version of Sophia's rise to power during the reign of her brother Fedor has been equally influential, but it contains several errors and misconceptions. His claim that she had to escape from a convent to gain influence is completely erroneous, for example. Her alleged closeness to Fedor is less easy to dismiss, but sisterly affection did not necessarily win the political power which Neuville accuses her of seeking. On the contrary, at times in 1676–82 Fedor promoted favourites such as I.M. Iazykov and A.T. Likhachev, who were potentially hostile to the Miloslavsky faction. Nor was Fedor a helpless invalid, constantly in need of nursing. He appears to have had a mind of his own, particularly in his choice of brides.⁵⁶ There is much more concrete evidence for Vasily Golitsyn's rise to prominence during Fedor's reign, but Neuville barely touches upon this phase of the prince's career.

Interestingly, the account of Sophia's intrigues in the MSS is much less detailed and vindictive than the one which appears in the book. Only the latter, for example, includes the much-quoted remark that 'without having ever read Machiavelli nor absorbed what he has to teach, she knows all his maxims naturally, and above all the one which says that if you wish to rule you must shrink at nothing and be prepared to commit any crime.' There is a hint of admiration in Neuville's description of Sophia as 'ambitious and courageous beyond her sex', but mostly this is a stock tale of female wickedness, of poison plots, attempted fratricide and sexual intrigues. In fact, Neuville's account of 1682 is the least reliable section of his work. The chronology is muddled and the details inaccurate, suggesting an inept attempt to fuse several accounts. There is too much emphasis on palace intrigue (although, oddly, no mention of Ivan Miloslavsky, whom Andrei Matveev later identified in his own work as the most ruthless of Sophia's supporters), too little on the social and economic unrest and religious dissidence which helped to fuel the rebellion.⁵⁷ If Sophia had wished to murder Peter in 1682 she patently

⁵⁴ B.I. Kurakin, 'Gistoriia o tsare Petre Alekseeviche i blizhnikh k nemu liudiakh' in *Rossiiu podnial na dyby. Istorii otechestva v romanakh, povestiakh, dokumentakh. Veka XVII–XVIII*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1987, p. 376.

⁵⁵ E.N. Williams, *The Penguin Dictionary of English and European History 1485–1789*, Harmondsworth, 1980, p. 342.

⁵⁶ See Hughes, *Sophia*, pp. 45–50.

⁵⁷ See L.A.J. Hughes, 'Sofiia Alekseyevna and the Moscow Rebellion of 1682', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 63 (1985), pp. 518–39.

failed to take the ample opportunities offered when the Naryshkin faction was at its most vulnerable.

Another area in which Neuville wielded much influence was on the question of the relationship between Sophia and Golitsyn. Several erroneous details can be dismissed at once. For example, Golitsyn's wife was not forced to take the veil, as Neuville claims. On the contrary, she accompanied her husband into exile, where she bore him more children. The existence of Sophia's children by the prince is not corroborated elsewhere. If there had been offspring, it seems unlikely that Sophia's enemies and the Church would have remained silent on the subject. The case for the two being lovers rests on two letters in cipher from Sophia to Golitsyn (which Neuville could not have seen) and what Prince Boris Kurakin later referred to as 'rumours amongst the people', on which Neuville's embroidered account would appear to be based.⁵⁸ Muscovite conventions would have made it difficult, although not impossible, for such a liaison to be conducted.

Sophia's alleged dreadfulness did not colour Neuville's assessment of her chief minister. His eulogy to Vasily Golitsyn may have been inspired by Jesuit sentiments, as argued above, as well as by the favourable impression made by Golitsyn at their meetings. It is worthy of note, however, that the most quoted but entirely conventional passage of Neuville's paeon of praise — that Golitsyn 'wished to people the deserts, enrich the beggars, make men of savages, and turn shepherds' huts into palaces of stone' — is found only in the published text and may, therefore, have been added by someone else. Whatever the case, Neuville is the only source for a number of Golitsyn's deeds, of which the most intriguing are his reputed plans for reform: 'He wanted to start by freeing the peasants and giving them the land which they cultivate on the tsar's behalf in return for payment of an annual tribute which, by his calculations, would have increased these princes' revenues by more than half.' Although at odds with the strict maintenance of serfdom and serf-owning in the legislation of the 1680s, Golitsyn's purported scheme is worthy of serious consideration. First, Golitsyn had already shown his mettle as a reformer, for example in the abolition of the code of precedence in 1682 and the scheme for restructuring ranks in 1681–82. Secondly, the project is mentioned not in the section with the stylised eulogy but in the chapter based on information supplied by Spafarius, who was well placed to have inside information about the prince's ideas. In a previous sentence Neuville writes that Golitsyn's object was 'to place his country on the same footing as all the others' and that he 'called for reports to be sent on all the states of Europe and their governments'. Memoranda from foreigners such as Johan van Keller,

58 Kurakin, 'Gistoriia', p. 378.

Patrick Gordon and Laurent Rinhuber and foreign political treatises in Golitsyn's library may well have made him ponder the topic of serfdom. However, Neuville's formulation of his project would appear to refer not to wholesale emancipation but in a more limited sense to the freeing of peasants on crown lands and extension of the quitrent or *obrok* system, whereby peasant paid dues rather than performing labour services. In general, references elsewhere in Neuville's work to plans for a poll tax, further development of a professional army, encouraging enterprise and extending the money economy reflect Golitsyn's inevitable concern with the military machine and raising revenues. There are no traces of abolitionist sentiment in the legislation of Sophia's regency, which continued inexorable trends of enserfment of the peasantry, recovery of fugitives and consolidation of the rights of landowners.⁵⁹ It is interesting, although idle, to speculate on how Russia might have developed if Peter had not banished Golitsyn in 1689. Perhaps F.C. Weber cited a distant echo of Golitsyn's project when he wrote in the 1720s that 'the Czar was once advised to abolish Slavery, and to introduce a moderate Liberty, which would both encourage his Subjects, and promote his own Interest at the same time; but the wild Temper of the Russians, who are not governed without Constraint, was a sufficient Reason for rejecting the Proposition at that Time.'⁶⁰

Chapters 4 and 5 of Neuville's text are taken up with describing the Crimean campaigns of 1687 and 1689. Apart from the usual garbling of personal and geographical names, these are much more accurate than his account of 1682, suggesting more reliable sources. Indeed, Neuville claimed to have learnt everything 'from the king of Poland's ministers who have resided at the tsars' court and followed their armies from the death of Tsar Fedor until the present day'. The inclusion of many minor verifiable details, for example, references to the death of Prince Mikhail Andreevich Golitsyn and the promotion to boyar of Leonty Nepluev (in September 1687 and December 1688 respectively) suggest a trustworthy written source. The account of the negotiations outside Perekop in 1689 which resulted in the retreat of Golitsyn's army is especially interesting, similar in several respects (e.g. the terms offered by the khan) to reports in Georgius David's memoir. In particular, the accounts tally quite closely with Patrick Gordon's and official Russian despatches.

Neuville's version of the palace coup of 1689 also tallies with those of a number of witnesses, notably Gordon's. Neuville's usefulness as a man on the spot, however, is more to do with being sensitive to rumour than as a well-informed eye-witness to the events themselves. The main protagonists — Sophia, Golitsyn, Shaklovity, Peter — left no first-hand

⁵⁹ See discussion in Hughes, *Russia and the West*, pp. 91–92, and *Sophia*, pp. 109–10.

⁶⁰ F.C. Weber, *The Present State of Russia*, vol. I, London, 1723, p. 49.

explanation of their motives, giving scope for endless speculation on the existence of a plot against Peter's life. Neuville (or his informants) believed in it. They do not examine the possibility that Peter's flight may have been engineered by his own followers in order to force an open confrontation between the parties and a clear-cut handover of power.

In his assessment of Russians in general ('I knew the character of Muscovites, who do not know what civility and honesty are') Neuville was true to his genre, rehearsing set assumptions about national deficiencies. Neuville was anxious to flatter his readers by less than subtle hints about the relative cultural levels of the French, the Poles and the Russians, which probably accounts for a number of amendments between the official published text, as translated here, and the MSS. Denigrating Muscovites and Orthodoxy served a dual purpose, whether the readers were French or Poles. The latter never accepted the 1686 settlement and continued to lure Cossacks into Polish service. The former resented any Russian successes against the Turks.

All these factors must be taken into account when assessing Neuville's picture of Russia in 1689. Neuville was prejudiced, devious, often ignorant (he did not know Russian or Polish, apparently) and liked gossip. To quote the pre-revolutionary historian N. Charykov, who subjected Neuville's information about Paul Menzies to close scrutiny, Neuville was 'an adept and cautious operator who cared not about literary success but about active service, who regarded the business of being a secret agent not as an amusement but as a means of making a living, who was more used to operating with direct speech and action than with the pen'.⁶¹ These priorities are reflected in the style of his account — laconic, almost bare of literary references, sometimes crude, usually fresh and direct. There is still more to learn about the man and his sources. His work, flawed though it is, still offers valuable insights into a little-known period of Russian history.

⁶¹ N.V. Charykov, 'Kriticheskii obzor izvestii o Pavle Menezii ... sodержashchikhsia v "Skazanii o Moskovii" Nevillia', *Posol'stvo v Rim i sluzhba v Moskve generala Pavla Meneziia*, SPb., 1906, p. 503.

CHAPTER 1

To the King¹

Sire

The Marquis de Béthune² learned in the month of July 1689 that envoys from Brandenburg and Sweden had travelled to Muscovy, and deemed it necessary to your Majesty's interests that someone be sent to that country to discover the subject of those ministers' negotiations. He did me the honour of offering me the commission, which surprised me as I had made the journey before,³ and more than once aroused the suspicions of those barbarians. As soon as I was told that your Majesty's interests were involved I accepted the proposal, and asked only that His Grace the Marquis de Béthune consider the fact that none but foreign envoys and merchants were permitted to enter that country. He undertook to obtain the king of Poland's⁴ approval for my journey. But that prince, in an excess of goodwill towards me, let him know that it would be virtually impossible for me to go unrecognised in that country. I would be unmasked by the tsars' minister, who was then resident at his court,⁵ or by others who had seen me there before. In that case I should be treated as a spy and sent to Siberia for the rest of my life. But since your Majesty's interests were at stake, he wished to see to it that I could make the journey both safely and successfully. To this end, he had letters of accreditation to the tsars and passports sent for me.

¹ Louis XIV, king of France 1643–1714. This dedication, as explained in the Introduction, is missing from NLB.

² François-Gaston de Béthune (1638–93) died before the book was published. He was married to the sister-in-law of King Jan Sobieski, and served as French ambassador to Poland in 1676–80 and 1685–92. He was expelled from Poland at the Holy Roman Emperor's insistence after a quarrel with the Austrian ambassador. His last posting was to Stockholm.

³ No record has come to light of Neuville's having visited Russia before 1689, although it is possible that he had done so under a different name. Madariaga speculates ('Who was Foy de la Neuville?', p. 23) that he may have done so either as a merchant or on a mission for the king of Poland.

⁴ Jan (John) III Sobieski (1629–96) ascended the elective throne of Poland in 1674. His most famous exploit was the relief of besieged Vienna in 1683. On his reign, and the Polish background in general, see N. Davies, *God's Playground. A History of Poland*, vol. I, Oxford, 1981, pp. 472–91.

⁵ In 1689 this was Ivan Volkov, who arrived in April of that year. He had visited Warsaw before, in 1686.

I immediately set out with a retinue proportionate to my rank, for in the most recent treaty⁶ between the Poles and the Muscovites it had been agreed no longer to defray envoys' expenses, nor to furnish them with a carriage. I reached the frontier in fourteen days, although it is 160 German leagues from Warsaw to Kazimierz, the furthest town in Poland. I sent news of my arrival and of my commission to the palatine [governor] of the Duchy of Smolensk, which I reached the day after, and was received in a manner described in the account of my journey. After waiting ten days for a reply to the dispatch which the palatine had sent to the court in order to know what he should do, I left for Moscow, and was lodged in the house that had been set aside for me by the chief minister⁷ 150 yards from the town gate. The *pristav* Spafarius,⁸ a Wallachian by birth, immediately came to bring greetings on the minister's behalf and to keep me company.

A week later he conducted me to the *prikaz* or Council, after which I was permitted to see the Polish minister,⁹ the ministers of Sweden, Denmark and Brandenburg, and some German officers. I had the good fortune to discover the purpose of the negotiations between those of Sweden and Brandenburg, which was none other than to make the king of Poland's actions look suspicious at the Muscovite court. They claimed that these were intended to support your Majesty by securing a separate peace with the Turks to the detriment of the [Holy] League, so that the king of Poland would be able thereafter to create a diversion in Ducal Prussia that would be favourable to you. The Dutch envoy¹⁰ lent them his support by swearing to the Muscovites that I was French, and had only come to Moscow to discover their secrets. These words made the Muscovites resolve to prevent me from leaving my house for a week. But the Polish envoy protested so loudly at the injustice that was being done to his

⁶ See Introduction and note 69, below.

⁷ 'Le premier Ministre'. The reference is to Prince Vasily Golitsyn. See note 24, below.

⁸ Nikolai Gavrilovich Spafarius (Spafary, sometimes also referred to as Milesco) (1636–1708) was a native of Turkish-ruled Moldavia (Wallachia was a neighbouring province, also under Turkish rule) who had studied in the West after falling into disfavour at home. In 1671 he settled permanently in Russia, where he was employed in the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs. In 1675–78 he went on a mission to China, of which he left a detailed account. See entry by C.M. Foust in *MERSH*, vol. 37, pp. 20–24. When Neuville met him, he was acting as an escort or warder (*pristav*) to foreign visitors.

⁹ Georges Dominique Daumont, Polish resident in Moscow 1687–94.

¹⁰ The representative of the States General in Moscow was Johan van Keller. As the 'spokesman' for Protestants in Moscow, Keller was hostile to the 'evil and sly' French and to the Jesuits, but willing to give limited support to the Austrian cause, because of Austria's alliance with Holland, and by extension to the Polish cause also. See T. Eekman, 'Muscovy's International Relations in the Late Seventeenth Century: Johan van Keller's Observations', *California Slavic Studies*, 14 (1992), pp. 44–67.

master in my person that the Council allowed me to come out, saying that they had only withdrawn my freedom to do so for fear that the people, aware of these suspicions, would insult me. This gave me the opportunity to say that I knew France well, and that her king, with all his millions, would not give twopence-halfpenny to find out the tsars' secrets, and that having the honour to be the king of Poland's minister I was not afraid of the people.

At last the Swedish¹¹ ministers were sent home unsuccessful. I lost no time in reporting this fact to the Marquis de Béthune and asking him to have me recalled, as I rightly predicted that a revolution was about to take place.

For my own safety, I was at first obliged to remain in my house and not venture out. There, my only consolation was the conversation of my *pristav*, who had only two months¹² since returned from a mission to China. As the information I extracted from him is quite curious and could potentially be useful to your Majesty, given the ease with which trade by land might be established with that country, I thought it best to deal with it separately in this account.

Some while after my return to Poland, the Marquis de Béthune was informed that the elector of Saxony and the duke of Hanover were due to meet at Carlsbad¹³ in Bohemia. He asked the king of Poland to send me with his condolences to the duke of Hanover on the death of his son, of which news had just been received, in the hope of discovering the subject of the interview between these princes so that your Majesty might be informed of it.¹⁴ I made the journey and reported to the Marquis de Béthune on all I had discovered, which only concerned proposals for an agreement between them over the Duchy of Lauenburg, on which they were unable to reach an accommodation.

Finally, Sire, when your Majesty informed the king of Poland of the death of Her Highness the Dauphine, he named the Prince Karstorski,¹⁵ currently at the Academy in Paris, to convey his condolences to your Majesty on your loss. But the Marquis de Béthune asked him to nominate me for the mission instead, hoping that in this capacity I could safely bear the dispatches that he gave me for your Majesty and your minister in

11 BN: 'and Brandenburger'.

12 Spafarius's mission to China ended in 1678! Neuville makes no reference to the recent war between Russia and China, which ended in August 1689 with the Treaty of Nerchinsk.

13 1698 misreads 'Karlstadt'.

14 As pointed out in the Introduction, this reference to Neuville's spying mission to Hanover is probably one reason why the dedication to the king is missing from NLB.

15 As in BN. 1698: 'Rzarstoeki'.

Hamburg, which I did, and that passing through courts where I am well known and always well received I might find out more of the affairs of these princes. They are in a sorry state, and all except the duke of Hanover and his house are in dire need of begging your Majesty for peace once more.

I was honoured with the rank of envoy to your Majesty, whose approval I most humbly beg for everything I did in my ardent zeal for his interests, and for the account I present to him with details which he may perhaps find curious in the moments of relaxation he allows himself from the glory and renown of his arms, and from his part in deciding the fate of Europe, which his victories and heavenly justice have placed in his hands.

I dare to hope, Sire, for this singular favour of your Majesty, being with ardent and indefatigable zeal

SIRE

Your Majesty's
Most humble, most obedient
And most loyal subject and servant.

De la Neuville.

CHAPTER 2

An Account of my Journey

The king of Poland did me the honour of naming me as his envoy extraordinary to Muscovy on 1st July 1689. I left Warsaw on the 19th of that month, travelling by the Smolensk road, because the Kiev road, which is the shortest way, was at that time infested with Tatars. As soon as the palatine or governor of the province, who is a man more polite than it befits a Muscovite to be,¹⁶ received word of my departure from Kazimierz for Smolensk, he sent a *pristav*, or gentleman, and an interpreter to intercept me. Having met me half a league from the town, they conducted me to a suburb outside the walls on the other side of the Dnieper, where they put me up temporarily in a house while they waited to be told which one the palatine had set aside for me. One of them went to tell him of my arrival. He immediately sent me his compliments together with refreshments consisting of a keg of vodka [*eau de vie*], another of Spanish wine and a third of mead, as well as a large amount of fowl, two sheep, a calf, one cartload of fish and another of oats. He also gave me the choice of a house in the town or one in the suburb. I accepted the one in the suburb, since it had no gates, and those of the town are shut early.

The next day I went to visit him in the citadel where he awaited me with the metropolitan and some of the local nobility. I will say nothing of the town itself, as it is only built of wood, like all the towns in that country, and is surrounded by a simple stone wall for protection against Polish raids.

In order to do me or, rather, himself greater honour, he put under arms 6,000 militiamen who are local peasants formed into corps of troops for such occasions and given reasonably clean clothes. They receive annually in payment from the tsars four pounds¹⁷ and three bushels of salt. All

¹⁶ The military governor or *voevoda* in Smolensk in 1689 was Ivan Alekseevich Musin-Pushkin, later one of Peter I's closest aides. and a founder member of the Senate. See N.V. Charykov, *Posol'stvo v Rim i sluzhba v Moskve generala Pavla Meneziia*, SPb., 1906, p. 645. The Jesuit missionary Philippe Avril records that Count Siry, the Polish ambassador to Persia, also found the governor 'a most honest man'. *Voyage en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie entrepris pour découvrir un nouveau chemin à la Chine*, Paris, 1692, Book IV, p. 283.

¹⁷ For a note on monetary values, see Preface.

boys from the age of six are enrolled and receive this pay, which means that these regiments are composed of old men and children, since the only way to leave the service is in death. Between all these smart soldiers, which they used to line the route from my house to his like a hedge, I passed in my carriage, followed on horseback by the *podstarosta* of Mogilev, or lieutenant to the king, and by a dozen officers of the garrison whom the king of Poland had ordered to accompany me that far. As soon as the palatine saw me enter the courtyard of the citadel he came to meet me at the top of the staircase, and escorted me to his apartment, where we did not sit down. After a few compliments were exchanged, translated by a major-general of Scottish birth who is called Menzies¹⁸ and speaks all the European languages, the palatine had several glasses of vodka brought, and these had to be drained to the health of the king of Poland and the tsars. Afterwards I took leave of the palatine, who accompanied me half-way back down the steps and stayed there to see me into my carriage. I returned home in the same manner as I had come, and there I found General Menzies waiting for me with orders from the palatine to keep me company during my stay in the town. I was agreeably surprised to find a man of his accomplishments in such a barbarous land, for besides all the languages which he knows and speaks to perfection, his knowledge is encyclopedic. His adventures deserve to be related.

After seeing the best parts of Europe he travelled to Poland in the hope of returning to Scotland from there. There was an intrigue with the wife of a colonel of the Lithuanian troops whose jealousy was aroused by the frequent visits that Menzies paid to his wife. He posted servants to kill him. However, Menzies was warned by the lady and took such effective measures that he found the husband, forced him to fight and killed him. He had to flee at once, but for want of a guide he ran into a party of Muscovites who were at that time making war on Poland. He was at first treated as a prisoner of war, but having tried to help his cause by describing what had really happened, he was given the choice of either serving the tsar or going to Siberia. He took the latter option because of his penchant for travel, but the present tsars' father, having asked to see him and liking what he saw, not only kept him on at court but even gave him sixty peasants (each peasant is worth about eight pounds a year to his master). Then the tsar made him marry the widow of a certain Marselis,¹⁹ who had been the first to discover the secret of making iron in Muscovy, which nowadays earns the tsars 100,000 pounds a year. This prince, no

18 The Aberdonian Paul Menzies (1637–94) entered Muscovite military service in 1661, together with fellow-Catholic, the future general Patrick Gordon, and also served on diplomatic missions to the West in the 1670s. See P. Dukes, 'Paul Menzies and his Mission from Muscovy to Rome 1672–1674', *The Innes Review*, Autumn 1984, pp. 88–95, and Charykov, *Posol'stvo*.

19 Peter Marselis (?–1672) was a merchant from Hamburg (BN calls him a Dane) who ran ironworks in Russia at Tula. Menzies married his widow Margarita in about 1676.

longer doubting his devotion, named him in 1672 to go to Rome on his behalf in order to offer Pope Clement [X] the reunification of the Russian and Roman churches under certain conditions. Returning home unsuccessful, he was made a major-general, and when Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich²⁰ realized that he was dying, he named him governor to the young prince Peter, his son,²¹ by whose side he remained right up to the start of the reign of Tsar Ivan.²² Afterwards, Princess Sophia²³ and Prince Golitsyn,²⁴ having failed to make him abandon Peter's cause, obliged him to go and live in Smolensk and to take part in the last campaign, in the hope that he would perish. This disgrace, however, has today become his fortune, for in the garrison he had the good luck to meet Peter's maternal grandfather,²⁵ who was a mere colonel there. The latter brought him back to Moscow as soon as his grandson took control, and he has several times

20 BN, NLB and 1698 refer to Tsar Aleksei (Alexis) Mikhailovich (reigned 1645–76) as 'Alexis Samuelowich'.

21 The information about Menzies being tutor or governor to the future Peter the Great (born 1672, reigned 1682–1725) is not confirmed in other sources, although other tutors are well documented in palace records. Foreign tutors were commonplace later, but in the 1670s the official appointment of a non-Orthodox foreigner, and a Catholic at that, to such a post would have met with strenuous protests from the Church. Perhaps Menzies exaggerated the significance of occasional meetings with Peter. Dukes points out, however ('Paul Menzies', p. 93) that Artamon Matveev and Kirill Naryshkin, the most influential men at court until Tsar Aleksei's death, were both related to the Scottish Hamiltons and that the Scottish connection may have overcome religious scruples. Charykov, *Posol'stvo*, pp. 646–47, goes to some lengths to establish that Menzies acted in some tutorly capacity, especially in respect of military games.

22 Tsar Ivan Alekseevich (Ivan V), son of Tsar Aleksei by his first wife, born in 1666, reigned jointly with his half-brother Peter I from 1682 to 1696. Handicapped by a variety of physical and mental disabilities, he was never more than a figurehead ruler. Neuville explains the circumstances of his accession to the throne in the following chapter. For the Romanov family tree, see notes 117 and 118.

23 Princess (Tsarevna) Sophia Alekseevna (1657–1704) ruled as regent from May 1682 to September 1689. Neuville provides a version of her rise to power and downfall in subsequent chapters. See also Introduction, above, and L.A.J. Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia*, New Haven, 1990.

24 Prince Vasily Vasil'evich Golitsyn (1643–1714) was *de facto* chief minister (there was no official post of that name) throughout Sophia's regency. Golitsyn's character and career are described by Neuville in subsequent chapters. See also Introduction, above, and L.A.J. Hughes, *Russia and the West. The Life of a Seventeenth-Century Westernizer, Prince Vasily Vasil'evich Golitsyn*, Newtonville, Mass., 1984.

25 Menzies first met Kirill Poluektovich Naryshkin (1623–91), the father of Peter's mother Natalia, not after 1682, as implied here, but in about 1668, when Naryshkin was serving as a captain of musketeers in Smolensk. Naryshkin was created a boyar after his daughter's marriage in 1671. In May 1682, after Sophia came to power, Kirill was banished to the monastery of St Cyril at Beloozero. Menzies was also sent away from Moscow in 1684 after he refused to abandon the Naryshkin party.

done me the courtesy of entertaining me in his home with the Naryshkins, father and son.²⁶

The chief minister was informed that I was at Smolensk, capital of the duchy of that name which the king of Poland ceded to the tsars in the League's interests in 1686. He sent orders to the palatine to have me brought in the usual way to the *stolitz*, which is to say the court, and which we incorrectly call Moscow, which is the name of the river that runs through it.²⁷

I left on 20 August²⁸ accompanied by a *pristav*, a captain and six soldiers. The first test of these gentlemen's valour came on the way through a wood twenty leagues wide, where there was not a single dwelling and in which we had to sleep and let the horses graze. During the night a storm of such violence blew up that the horses escaped from the *tabor*, or circle of wagons, that had been made and fled into the woods. I noticed this and told the officer to order some of the soldiers to go and look for them, and for the rest to cut wood fifty yards away so that we might keep a fire burning. To this the officer and soldiers replied as one man that they would not leave the *tabor* for a hundred ducats because seven years previously, in similar circumstances, several of their comrades had been murdered in that very spot. Finally we had to wait for daybreak, and at the mere whistle (which they use instead of a whip)²⁹ of one of those rogues all the horses returned to the *tabor*. After that I continued my journey as far as the suburb of the *stolitz*, which is separated from the town only by the Moskva river, which can be forded in that place. The officer who was with me showed me to a house and asked me to await his return with orders from the chief minister, to whom he had taken news of my arrival. He came back two hours later with orders to take me across the river and to escort me to the house that had been set aside for me, where the *pristav* Spafarius immediately arrived with compliments on the chief minister's behalf and orders to stay with me. As is the custom, I was immediately given an officer and six soldiers as a guard. They were enjoined to let no one enter my house for a week.³⁰ At last Golitsyn called me to the *prikaz* which is a large structure composed of four groups of enormous buildings which that prince has had built and in which there are several chambers, each set aside for a particular council.

26 His eldest son was Lev Kirillovich Naryshkin (1664–1705). In 1690–1702 he headed the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs.

27 *Stolitsa* (*stolitz* in Neuville's rendition) actually means 'capital'. The city and the river are both called 'Moskva' in Russian.

28 BN: '10 August'. This may reflect the ten-day difference between the Old (Julian) and New (Gregorian) calendars in the seventeenth century.

29 Margin note in BN and NLB: 'This whistle serves the Muscovites as both a whip and spurs to make their horses go.'

30 BN and NLB: 'until I had visited the Council I had to put up with this ceremony for a week'.

Before Golitsyn's ministry all councils were held in a few barns. There he presided, seated at the end of a big table with several boyars beside him. He bade me sit down, after which a Latin interpreter asked for my letters. I gave him those which the grand chancellor of Lithuania had written for him, in which he indicated that the king had sent me to Muscovy on his business and had charged me to deliver a letter to the tsars on his behalf. He said that he would speak of it to the Tsar Ivan, who was the only one in Moscow at the time, and that he hoped that I would soon have an audience. Afterwards, he asked me in the customary way for news of the chancellor, not daring out of respect to ask for news of the king.³¹ Then I got up to leave. He rose too, and expressed the wish that I would soon have the pleasure of seeing the tsar.

A few days later I asked out of civility for an audience at his home, where I was received in a manner that made me think I was at the court of some Italian prince. During the conversation in Latin concerning all that was happening in Europe, and what I thought of the war that the emperor and so many princes were waging against France, and above all about the revolution in England,³² he had all sorts of wines and vodkas set before me. At the same time he advised me in an obliging tone not to drink any of them. He promised to obtain an audience for me within a few days, which he surely would have done but for his disgrace, which brought such a change in affairs that from one moment to the next cries of 'Fire!' and 'Murder!' were heard. And if providence had not ordained that the Tsar Peter was bold enough to have the most important members of the princess's party arrested, just such a massacre as those I have just spoken of would surely have occurred.

Things stayed like that for six weeks without anyone knowing who to turn to. This made me decide to write a letter to the younger Golitsyn, Peter's favourite,³³ in which I expressed my surprise at having had no reply to the note requesting an audience and the opportunity to hand over my letters which I had presented on my arrival. He made various excuses

31 BN and NLB: 'since the kings of Poland never write to ministers of that country'.

32 BN and NLB: 'He had seen in reports from that country that at that time I had been sent there by the King of Poland, and had been arrested and robbed while trying to leave.' See Introduction, p.xx, on Neuville's visit to England in 1688.

33 Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn (1654–1714), cousin of Vasily Golitsyn, had been one of Peter's attendants. Legend has it that he cured Peter of a fear of water. In 1687 he became director of the Chancellery of Kazan. On his role at court and his temporary disgrace, see L.A.J. Hughes, 'Russia in 1689: Court Politics in Foy de la Neuville's *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie*' in *New Perspectives on Muscovite History*, London, 1993, pp. 177–87. His reputation as a heavy drinker is confirmed in other sources, for example, the memoir of Prince B.I. Kurakin, 'Gistoriia o tsare Petre Alekseeviche i blizhnikh k nemu liudiakh' in *Rossiiu podnial na dyby. Istoriia otechestva v romanakh, povestiakh, dokumentakh. Veka XVII-XVIII*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1987.

concerning the recent revolution and assured me that the tsar would soon return to the *stolitz*, which he in fact did on the first day of November.

As soon as I was informed of Tsar Peter's arrival, I asked his favourite for an audience and even went to see him. He did not treat me in the same way his relative had, for several cups of vodka had to be drained, and the whole interview consisted of drinking. All I was able to get out of this drunkard was that I would have an audience in three days' time, after which I would be free to leave. However, as he was disgraced before this period was up, I³⁴ was obliged to make other arrangements.

The post of *dumnyi d'iak* or secretary of state for foreign affairs had been given on a purely temporary basis to someone called Emilian [Ukraitsev].³⁵ This name, which means 'claw' in the Slavonic language, suits him very well, as he is very corrupt and accepts bribes with both hands. Although this person was the creature of the elder Golitsyn and beholden to him for his fortune, having originally been only a minor clerk, he did not hesitate to be the first to blacken the memory of his benefactor. As he was jealous because I had never addressed myself to him to obtain leave to go, but always to the younger Golitsyn, Peter's favourite, he refused to carry out the order which the latter had caused the Tsar Peter to give. That would have left me free to choose either to wait until Epiphany for an audience or (following an order from the king of Poland who feared the consequences of these upheavals) to go home. He even used one opportunity to redeem his conduct to persuade Peter that I should be kept there for a while longer by insinuating that the king of Poland had only sent me to Moscow in order to conspire with the chief minister and to assure the princess and Golitsyn of his protection. He justified this suspicion with the fact that I had, contrary to the custom of that country and the honour of my rank, paid several private visits to this prince. As I was well informed of everything that was going on, I thought of a ruse, which was covertly to offer Ukraitsev money to obtain my permission to leave. He promised to do this for the sum of one hundred ducats. But instead of sending it to him as had been agreed with his go-between, I took the money myself on the pretext of paying him a visit. As my friend Matveev,³⁶ to whom I had explained the affair, was there at the

34 BN, NLB and 1698: 'il' ('he'). This is surely a slip of the pen.

35 Emelian Ignat'evich Ukraitsev (1641–1708) spent most of his career in the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs, acting as one of its directors from 1689 to 1699. In 1700 he helped negotiate peace with Turkey. See L.A.J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 40, pp. 174–77. His post *dumnyi d'iak* (literally: secretary to the council) is rendered by Neuville as 'Domini Diacre', 'Dommith Diak'. BN, NLB and 1698 have, variously, 'Emelian Werewan', 'Emilian Vevenxan' and 'Emelian Ewerewno'. We can only assume that Neuville heard Ivanovich rather than Ignat'evich and missed the name 'Ukraitsev' altogether.

36 Andrei Artamonovich Matveev (1666–1728), referred to in BN and NLB as 'Harthemonowich', 'Harthemonnerrich' in 1698, was the son of Artamon

same time as the minister had asked me to meet him, I had the pleasure of speaking to him in the presence of this young lord in a very proud and bold tone. I did this because I knew the character of Muscovites, who do not know what civility and honesty are. Therefore one should not bandy words, and still less entreaties with them when one wants something, because that makes them scorn people. They should instead be treated in a very cavalier way if you want to succeed and achieve your aim.³⁷ I repeatedly maintained that the rights of man were being violated in my person, that I saw all too well that the king of Poland had been misinformed when he had assured me in naming me for this mission that the Muscovites were no longer barbarians, that I was so uncomfortable in their country that I wished it was permitted for me to purchase for money permission to return home, but that having the honour to be the minister of a great neighbouring king and ally of the tsars, I could do no more than inform him that I had been prevented from carrying out the order he had sent me to cease soliciting an audience and to present myself to him straight away. We spoke thus in Latin, my friend Matveev acting as interpreter, and emptied several cups of vodka and Spanish wine to the health of the king and of the tsars before I took my leave of this minister. I had the hundred ducats which I have mentioned presented to him by a Polish gentleman, saying that they were for his secretary. He did not dare accept the money, so I spoke to everyone of his generosity, feigning to complain that I had heard this was the only way to obtain permission to leave. In the mean time, the Tsar Peter had obliged his favourite Golitsyn to return to the court, so I went to see him immediately and celebrate his return with him. He professed to be very surprised that Ukraintsev had not sent me on my way according to the order that he had passed to him before his departure, and said he would complain to the tsar, who thought I had already gone. Since I had waited so long without being accorded the honour of kissing his Majesty's hand, he said that he would see to it that I had this honour.

I was agreeably surprised two days later to see two Gentlemen of the Tsar's Bedchamber dismount at my house. In truth, they were gentlemen in name only, being impoverished and only having for income 200 crowns a year from the tsars. After their usual ceremonies, which consist of crossing themselves many times and frequently bowing their heads before some picture of the Virgin which is always found in the corner, they greeted me by inquiring after my health on the tsar's behalf. After

Sergeevich (see below, note 40), and bitterly hostile to Tsarevna Sophia and her circle on account of his father's murder in 1682. Matveev later served as envoy to Holland, France, England (where an incident involving him led to the Act on Diplomatic Immunity) and Austria and later still as senator. His account of the 1682 rebellion, written towards the end of his life, was influential in blackening Sophia's reputation. See Introduction, pp. xxvi and xxix.

37 Margin note in BN and NLB: 'You have to speak proudly to Muscovites if you want them to treat you well.'

this question had been answered by many cups of vodka and the usual toasts, they declared that the tsar wished to see me, to give me presents and to cover my expenses from my arrival in Moscow until the day of my departure, and that in the mean time the tsar had sent me his dinner. To this I replied that I would not fail to inform the king of all the favours with which the tsar had showered me, which I promptly did. The dinner consisted of a forty-pound piece of smoked beef, several dishes of fish cooked in nut oil, half a pig, a dozen half-cooked pies made of meat, garlic and saffron, and three big flagons of vodka, Spanish wine and mead. It is easy to judge from the list of these dishes that the greatest pleasure I found in this sumptuous feast was the honour that was being done me. The next day, another gentleman came to warn me to be ready to go to the audience the day after. Instead, he told me that the tsars had gone on a pilgrimage together that day and that I would only have the honour of seeing them upon their return. Having been so informed, I went immediately to Golitsyn's house, where I also found Matveev. When they both asked me how I had found the dinner which the tsar had sent me, I answered that unfortunately French cooks had so spoiled my taste that I could eat no other cooking. They replied to this by saying that they had long hoped to try French roast meats. At this, I offered to entertain them the next day, and they accepted on condition that only their friends would be present. So I asked them to invite the latter themselves, and they turned out to be the Danish commissioner³⁸ and a few other³⁹ merchants at whose houses they usually drink in order to save their own wine. Both seemed so satisfied with this meal that they sent several dishes to their wives and unceremoniously took away all the dry sweetmeats with them, assuring me that they had never eaten so well, and that I should not have to wait long to be entertained in like manner by them. Three days after this banquet, Matveev invited me to dine at his house, where I was very properly entertained. The whole meal consisted (because of their Lent, which had begun the day before) of fish from the Caspian Sea and the Volga which are brought alive back up the river to the *stolitz*. To do me greater honour, he called his wife and presented her to me. I greeted her in the French manner and she drank a cup of vodka to my health, passing the cup to me so that I might do likewise. She is the only woman in that country who uses no rouge and has never painted herself. She is also quite pretty.

Prince Golitsyn should have been at this dinner, but as the young tsar had called for him that morning, we contented ourselves with drinking to his health and to that of others till midnight. The guests were the same as at

³⁸ Heinrich Butenant (von Rosenbusch) (? –1702), commercial agent to the king of Denmark. He left an account of the musketeer rebellion of 1682. See J. Keep, 'Mutiny in Moscow 1682: A Contemporary Account', *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 23 (1981), pp. 410–42.

³⁹ BN: 'German'.

my house. The young lord Matveev is very witty, speaks good Latin, enjoys reading, is delighted to hear news of what is going on in Europe and has a particular inclination towards foreigners. I persuaded him to learn the French language, assuring him that since he is only twenty-two years old he could learn it easily, and thereafter amply satisfy his appetite for reading, because all ancient and modern authors are translated into that language. He is the son of Artamon Matveev,⁴⁰ who came originally from Lithuania. His mother was Scottish. He learned Latin from a Pole whom his father was permitted to take into exile with him. His father was disgraced by Fedor, whose chief minister he had been. Both having been recalled after the death of this prince, Matveev had the sorrow upon his return from exile of seeing his father murdered during the Khovansky rebellion.

As the tsars had returned from their pilgrimage three days previously and as I had heard nothing, I sent a request for news to the younger Golitsyn. He only replied that as the Council had not seen fit to give me an audience before Epiphany, I was free to stay or go as I wished. As everything was ready for my departure, I was not surprised at this change. But I learned from the Danish commissioner that the Naryshkins were angry because I had never visited them and jealous of the banquet I had given Golitsyn, whose star was beginning to wane.⁴¹ They had conspired with Ukraintsev to frustrate this prince by reversing all the decisions which the favourite had caused his master to take in my favour. I chose to leave all the more willingly because I had completed the mission with which the Marquis de Béthune had charged me⁴² and for which I had come to that country, caring little for the audience which they had promised me and still less for the honour that they claimed I would be receiving when I was shown the tsars. On top of that I was very tired with all the proceedings of these barbarians and vexed at having been a reluctant witness to all the troubles and disorders which took place during the time I was there. I had almost not dared to leave my home, and had no

40 Artamon Sergeevich Matveev (1625–82) was guardian of Peter's mother, Tsaritsa Natalia. After a long service career, in 1670 he became a boyar and from 1671 to 1676 directed the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs and was close to the tsar. After Alexis's death in 1676, the Miloslavskys, relatives of the tsar's first wife, had Matveev and his family banished on charges of corruption and practising black magic. He was recalled by Peter's supporters in May 1682, only to become one of the musketeers' first victims on 15 May. See L.A.J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 12, pp. 142–44.

41 Margin note in BN and NLB: 'I had purposely done this to please Golitsyn, who gave no outward sign of his disgrace'.

42 NLB: 'because I had completed all the secret assignments I had been given'. For reasons for such differences between the texts, see Introduction, p. xxv. From this point to 'these memoirs' does not appear in BN or NLB. Neuville is evidently justifying himself or making excuses for bringing back too little information, and blaming Spafarius. A similar complaint appears in the last chapter (though again, not in BN and NLB).

one for company but my *pristav* [Spafarius]. He was, in truth, a man of wit who conversed agreeably. But he would have amused me a lot more and eased the chagrin I was feeling if he had been more open and if fear, as you can well imagine, had not stopped him from telling me lots of curious things which he knew and the peculiarities of this court which have not come into my knowledge. I am very angry about this and would have taken great pleasure in putting them into these memoirs. I had him declare my intention to the ministers. I left two days after, on 16 December, to return to Poland with the same escort as I had brought with me. I arrived in mid-morning on the twentieth at Smolensk and immediately and without ceremony went to see the palatine, who treated me with great courtesy. From there I continued my journey with the same *pristav*, interpreter and soldiers as far as Kazimierz, and from there returned to Warsaw via Vilna, arriving on 3 January 1690. The reason for this haste was that the most favourable time of year for travel in Muscovy is winter, because that country is the lowest in Europe and is therefore also the marshiest. In summer, one is reduced to making only four to five leagues a day, and is often obliged to cut wood in order to make bridges to travel over the marshes and little brooks. This is because the roads of that country, of which a few are paved with wood for ten or twelve leagues, are extremely badly maintained and often impassable. By contrast, in the winter you travel by sled, lying down as if in bed and being pulled with great ease and speed over the snow by a single horse. With this carriage and your own horses you usually travel⁴³ day and night for fifteen or sixteen hours at a time, easily covering one German league in an hour.

43 BN: 'Only the first and last sleds have drivers, and in this conveyance you bump along ...'

CHAPTER 3

The State of Muscovy from 1682 until 1687

Tsar Fedor Alekseevich,⁴⁴ the son of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, died at the age of twenty-two leaving no children. His brother Ivan and the princess Sophia were from the same marriage as him. Peter, though younger and from the second marriage, initially succeeded him because of his elder brother's incapacity. But shortly afterwards Ivan was elected, proclaimed and crowned like him through the intrigues of Princess Sophia, although he already suffered from epilepsy and at every full moon has all its symptoms.⁴⁵ His brother Fedor died of it.

This ambitious and power-hungry princess well understood that she could make herself absolute mistress of the whole state because of Ivan's imbecility and Peter's youth. Both of them would have only the name and title of tsars, while she would have all the power. She would only have the officials of the crown and the great lords to fear. They might oppose her plans either because of their own individual ambitions or because of the displeasure they might collectively feel at finding themselves governed by a woman. Using Khovansky,⁴⁶ whom she won over to her

⁴⁴ Tsar Fedor Alekseevich (born 1661, reigned 1676–82) was the son of Tsar Aleksei and his first wife Maria Miloslavskaia, therefore Peter's half-brother. For a family tree, see below, note 117. Fedor was well-educated by Muscovite standards and, although sickly, was not the helpless invalid sometimes portrayed in traditional histories. His first wife and new-born son died shortly after the latter's birth in 1678. He married again just two months before his death. See L.A.J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 11, pp. 77–79.

The sequence of events in 1682, which Neuville muddles, was as follows: Fedor died on 27 April and was buried on the 28th. Peter was proclaimed tsar immediately after Fedor died, on 27 April. The musketeers, who had made complaints about abuses by officers shortly before Fedor's death, renewed their protests, which were now exacerbated by rumours of intrigues in the palace. They invaded the Kremlin on 15 May on a rumour that Tsar Ivan had been strangled, but temporarily ceased their revolt on 17 May. On 26 May a joint tsardom or diarchy was proclaimed, with Ivan as senior and Peter as junior tsar. At around the same time Sophia became regent. It was at this point that Prince Ivan Khovansky tried to use the musketeers to gain more concessions and more power for himself and his clan, as well as for the Old Believers. He was arrested and executed on 17 September.

⁴⁵ The reference to Sophia's intrigues is not in BN. The latter also mentions that Ivan was 'blind'. The exact cause of Fedor's death is not known.

⁴⁶ Prince Ivan Andreevich Khovansky (?–1682) began his military career in the reign of Peter's grandfather, Tsar Mikhail. Under Tsar Aleksei during the

side, she secretly aroused⁴⁷ the *strel'tsy* or musketeers,⁴⁸ a sort of militia like the Janissaries of the Porte. On the pretext of avenging the death of Tsar Fedor, whom they claimed had been poisoned, they conducted such a cruel massacre of the nobility that if Princess Sophia, seeing that they were going too far, had not emerged from the depths of the imperial palace and shown herself to them, they would have continued setting upon innocent and guilty alike in ever greater numbers in order to have the spoils of the slaughtered people. The boyars, or senators, and the patriarch⁴⁹ intervened as well in order to stop the bloodshed, and when the great upheaval had subsided, the Tsarevich Peter Alekseevich was crowned tsar to the approbation of all Russia. This prince is pleasant and handsome, and the liveliness of his mind might lead one to hope that he could do great things if he were well advised. Princess Sophia was not very pleased at this. She would have preferred to see the crown on the head of Ivan Alekseevich, her brother by her father and her mother, who would be tsar alone, without a partner, which would make her regent by

Russo-Polish war of 1654–67 he suffered several military defeats and earned the nickname of the Braggart. In 1682 he emerged from the comparative obscurity of a provincial governorship to take over the Chancellery of Musketeers in the *wake* of the May rebellion (there is no evidence that he instigated the initial outbreak) and fomented further revolt in the cause of the Old Believers. Sophia succeeded in isolating and then executing him and his son in September 1682. The troubles of that year are sometimes referred to, inaccurately, as the *Khovanshchina*, the term which Musorgsky used as the title of his opera.

47 The preceding part of this paragraph is not in BN or NLB.

48 The corps of musketeers (*stre'tsy*, 'estrel'es' in BN, NLB and 1698) was formed in the middle of the sixteenth century as Muscovy's first regular infantry troops. By the late seventeenth century they numbered about 20,000. The musketeers lived in special garrisons, received wages, provisions and land from the government, and in peacetime engaged in small-scale trade and handicrafts. As well as waging war, they did guard, escort and fire-fighting duties. An élite corps of mounted troops provided a royal bodyguard. They were administered by a government department, the Chancellery of Musketeers. By 1682 the musketeers had many grievances, including ill-treatment and exploitation by their officers, poor wages and excessive duties, often on long and arduous campaigns. In May 1682 the injustice apparently done to the 'true tsar' Ivan, who was bypassed in favour of his younger half-brother, combined with resentment against unpopular officers to spark rebellion which operated to the advantage of Sophia's party. However, unrest continued after the injustice to Ivan had apparently been righted, when Prince Khovansky incited the musketeers to further rebellion. See L.A.J. Hughes, 'Strel'tsy', *MERSH*, vol. 37, pp. 205–10.

49 The patriarch, to whom Neuville never refers by name, was Joachim (secular name Ivan Savelov). He took monastic vows in 1655 and became patriarch in 1674. By all accounts a semi-literate and narrow-minded conservative, he evidently found it hard to reconcile himself to a female ruler. In addition, he strongly opposed the admission of Jesuits to Moscow under the terms of the agreement with the Holy League, condemned the employment of foreign officers in the Russian army and resented the influence of the 'Latinizer' Silvester Medvedev on the government. Not surprisingly, he favoured Peter's party rather than Sophia's.

right. The princess's ambition did not allow her to hide her chagrin for long. In an outburst she publicly opposed Peter's coronation, claiming that it was an insult to his elder brother.⁵⁰ Little good it did for the boyars and the patriarch to remind her of Ivan's incapacity, and that he was an infirm, blind and half-crippled prince. She wanted to drive her point home, and to this end used the musketeers, of whom 18,000 in twenty-eight regiments were ordinarily stationed in Moscow as the tsars' bodyguard. She found a means of enlisting to her cause the Boyar Khovansky, president of these soldiers' Ministry. Thus having power to wield, she made this large body of guards rise up and have Ivan crowned and proclaimed first reigning tsar in tandem with Peter, and finally obtained agreement that, as these princes were still very young, she would take upon herself the burden of State.

It was hoped that the troubles would end there and that things would remain peaceful, but there were plots among the militia. The militia is composed on the one hand of musketeers and on the other of the townsmen of that city, who are almost all great and very rich merchants who are happy to enrol and to be able to call themselves members of the corps. Only when they have to stand guard are they given uniforms, which they return afterwards with the condition that they are given as many blows with a stick to the backside as there are stains on the returned uniform. The uniforms never leave Moscow, except for those given to the musketeers who follow the tsars on horseback in the country. Townsmen are allowed to have a servant stand guard for them when it is their turn. They are normally excused the blows to the backside if they provide a new uniform. This keeps the livery clean at all times.

The court, judging by reports which it had received about what was taking place, could not guess the cause of the trouble but all the same had suspicions that no good was intended to the royal house. Without letting anyone know, they thought it best to retire to a cloister known as the Trinity about twelve German leagues from Moscow.⁵¹ A few days later the militia rose up again and the departure of the court increased the disorder and tumult. The boyar Khovansky let his musketeers off the leash, allowing murder and pillage, and at that time it was sufficient to belong to a party other than Khovansky's to become guilty of the murder of the late tsar. The principal doctor of the late Fedor, accused of having poisoned his master, was dismembered. The Great Chancellor *Vremennik*

⁵⁰ See Introduction, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

⁵¹ The Trinity-St Sergius monastery, 45 miles to the northeast of Moscow in the town of Sergiev Posad (formerly Zagorsk), was founded in 1345 by the most important Russian saint Sergius (Sergii) of Radonezh. It was, and remains, a major place of pilgrimage. The tsars customarily visited the monastery for the feast of St Sergius on 25 September. The court withdrew to Trinity twice in 1682: in mid-July and again in the second half of August (via Kolomenskoe and other royal estates).

Dolgoruky was assassinated, and his son killed.⁵² To be brief, the licence and the cruelty were so incredible that one shrinks from describing them.

Princess Sophia had been warned of what was going on in Moscow, and turned the massacres to her own advantage. She sent compliments to the boyar Khovansky on the zeal he had shown in avenging the death of her late brother, assuring him that she was obliged to him for his loyalty. Everything the princess did was only for political reasons and to flatter a madman who was to be feared because he had weapons to hand. However, these honest dealings produced a very bad effect, completely different from what she had imagined. The boyar thought that after the relations he had had with her and these testimonies of friendship and gratitude, he could do anything, and even have himself crowned.

The way forward seemed not only obvious to him but also very easy. He saw that approval had been given for the massacres which he had carried out of all the greatest nobles, who had the most credit and power and who therefore could have opposed and thwarted him. He had even been thanked for them. He rightly thought himself absolute master of the militia and was sure of having won its friendship and affection by allowing it to thief and pillage. He was firmly convinced that there was not one of the militia who would not blindly follow him and do anything for him, some through gratitude and others in the hope of gain and an increased fortune under a new regime. What is more, he had instilled in them great loathing for Tsars Ivan and Peter: Ivan because of his infirmity and imbecility, and Peter because of his tender years, after which, by all appearances, it could be expected that he would suffer the same misfortunes as his brothers. Thus there was no hope of ever seeing on the throne a prince who knew everyone's value and worth and who knew how to reward them. In view of all this, Khovansky made up his mind and determined to take the final step. But he thought that to take it with some legality and decorum he would have first to make an alliance with the royal house. This would better disguise his plan and camouflage its execution when the time was ripe. To this end, he therefore proposed the marriage of his son with Princess Catherine,⁵³ Princess Sophia's younger sister. But his temerity did not have the success he had imagined. The insolence of his plan displeased the court, as it was realised that this alliance could only work to the prejudice of the young tsars. Princess Sophia herself found the means of preventing an inconvenience that

52 Iury Alekseevich Dolgoruky (?–1682) was a close friend of Tsar Aleksei and enjoyed a long career in the military and civil service. His last post was as director of the Chancellery of Musketeers, but he was never 'Great Chancellor'. His son, Mikhail, was his second-in-command in the Chancellery. For an explanation of the term 'Vremennik', see below, note 57. The murder of the Dolgorukys and Dr Daniel von Haden (Gaden) all occurred between 15 and 17 May, earlier than suggested by Neuville's sequence of events.

53 Ekaterina Alekseevna (1658–1718).

could only be dangerous to the Empire of the Russians. Foreseeing that her authority would be in greater danger from Khovansky's ambition than it had been from all the people he had killed, she was the first to suggest that he should be removed and punished for all of his crimes, to most of which she had consented.

It is a custom in Muscovy solemnly to celebrate the name-days of the offspring of the royal house. The prince or princess whose festival it is holds a banquet and receives compliments from the most important people in the Empire. At the Trinity Monastery the court wished to celebrate the festival of St Catherine,⁵⁴ whose name had been given to the princess whom the Boyar Khovansky intended for his son. Princess Sophia informed all the boyars, and made a special point of inviting Khovansky, who was carrying on in Moscow with the cruelties of which the princess had pretended to approve. However, steps were taken to get rid of this pretender to the throne. The Boyar Prince Vasily Vasil'evich Golitsyn, of whom we shall speak further in this account, advised that things should not be put off any longer. In fact no time at all was lost. Khovansky was attacked on the way to the Trinity by about 200 horsemen who had been lying in wait. He was captured and taken to a nearby house, where his sentence was read to him and where his own head and that of his son were struck off.

The musketeers were at first surprised at this news and stunned, as if a thunderbolt had struck the whole corps. But in a little while their astonishment turned to anger and rage. They marched around saying that they had lost their father, and swearing out loud and with one voice that they wanted to be revenged for his death on all those they thought guilty of it, no matter who they might be. In fact, they did seize arsenals and munitions of war and were, it seems, in a mood to stop at nothing. The court, having been warned of the danger that was threatening the State, assembled the other troops, who had a long-standing and irreconcilable jealousy and hatred of the musketeers, and ordered the German officers, who are there in great numbers, to come immediately to the Trinity. Everyone obeyed, leaving their wives and children, but none of the musketeers was arrested for fear that they would take revenge on all their families for their obedience to the tsars. Any fears that might have sprung to mind were not without foundation. The Germans had their quarters in a suburb of Moscow called Kukui,⁵⁵ and the musketeers did not neglect to

54 This is an error. The feast of St Catherine is on 24 November. The name-day being celebrated was in fact Sophia's, on 17 September, and not at Trinity but at the royal village of Vozdvizhenskoe. The Khovanskys were executed on that same day.

55 The Moscow Foreign Quarter (*nemetskaia sloboda*, literally 'German' settlement or quarter after the Muscovite convention of referring to all Northern Europeans as *nemtsy*, the modern term for 'Germans') accommodated foreign military personnel, craftsmen and merchants serving in Moscow. A new site

travel there with the intention of doing some dark deeds in the heat of the moment. But they were stopped by the remonstrances of some of their older comrades, who told them with sound judgement and good sense that if the Germans' wives were massacred, the husbands would not rest until they had avenged them. Their vengeance would fall on every single one of the musketeers with implacable animosity. After such a cruel action, they could never again hope for peace or pardon. The musketeers thought about it, and let themselves be persuaded. The Quarter survived.

Feeling intimidated and finding themselves without a leader, the musketeers sought to make peace. They found the court well disposed to accord it them, for to tell the truth that was all it wanted. The militia had killed their colonels and their other officers, so they sent their veterans to the court to ask pardon. That was obtained without much difficulty, and the tsars then immediately returned to Moscow accompanied by the nobility and all the foreign officers.

The unarmed⁵⁶ musketeers came to meet them, prostrated themselves and cried out for mercy. When the young tsars had made a sign with their hands that they were forgiven, the contrite soldiers got up, escorted the tsars all the way to the palace, and shed tears of joy to see their princes back in their capital city, and to see them show clemency.

The same day, Prince Vasily Vasil'evich was honoured with the office of Great Chancellor and that of *vremennik*, or temporary minister of state, which is to say administrator of the Empire for a certain prescribed time.⁵⁷ Prince Golitsyn is incontestably one of the cleverest, most polite and most magnificent citizens that country has ever had, and he intended

was allocated in 1652 on the Iauza river, with the intention of separating 'heretics' from Russians, but by Peter's time barriers were breaking down. It was in the Quarter that Peter found his first foreign friends and a foreign mistress. Kukui (or Kokui) was a crude name used by Russians for the Foreign Quarter. As Neuville suggests, foreigners were generally regarded with suspicion and animosity by common folk. See S. Baron, 'The Origins of 17th-century Moscow's Nemeckaja sloboda', *California Slavic Studies*, V (1970), pp. 1-18.

56 As in BN and NLB: 'desarmez'. 1698 has 'des Armées' (from the armies), clearly a misreading.

57 BN and NLB: 'The name Vasil'evich is his father's Christian name, since among the Muscovites, it is the custom to take as a surname your father's name to show whose son you are, ending it with the diminutive -vich. Among the Poles, the son of a *voevoda* calls himself *voevoches*.'

The office that Golitsyn actually received (on 17/18 May, not in October, as suggested here) was that of director of the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs. Government posts were not made for a 'certain prescribed time' and Golitsyn held the post until his disgrace in 1689. He was also awarded the title Guardian of the Great Royal Seal and directorship of the Foreign Mercenaries Chancellery, as Neuville notes below. The term *vremennik* (Neuville has 'Vreminik') is probably a corruption of *vremenshchik*, meaning 'favourite', but etymologically the word also suggests 'temporary'.

to put it on the same footing as other countries. He spoke good Latin and enjoyed seeing foreigners and entertaining them without forcing them to drink vodka. He did not drink vodka himself, all his enjoyment coming from conversation. As he disdained the great because of their incompetence, he only made friends of people of merit and employed those whom he believed to have it and whom he hoped would be loyal to him.⁵⁸ This Chancellor began his tenure with a thoroughgoing inquisition of the guilty musketeers. The leaders were executed and the rest condemned to exile.

From among these exiles, eleven regiments were formed, one of which was relegated to Belgorod on the frontier of Tartary, another to Simbirsk on the Volga in the kingdom of Kazan, a third to Kursk in the Ukraine, and a fourth to Sevsk in the same province. Things having been thus pacified, Prince Golitsyn seized the positions of power left vacant because of the massacres, and among others that of *Prikaz inozemskoi*,⁵⁹ which is to say director of the bureau which deals with foreign infantry, cavalry and dragoons. That bureau had always been run by a boyar senator from the *Prikaz belorusskii*, or bureau of White Russia, where the affairs of the Cossacks and the Ukraine are usually settled.

The prince named as chief judge of the musketeers a rich man named Shaklovity,⁶⁰ a simple secretary of State who became *okol'nichii*, the office immediately below that of boyar senator. Golitsyn gave to his own cousin the *Prikaz Kazanskii*, or Ministry of Kazan, which deals with the affairs of Kazan, Astrakhan and Cherkassia. He gave to the *dumnyi*

58 Margin note in BN and NLB.

59 The *prikazy* were central government departments. Neuville garbles the Russian names: *Prekazinoy zemezke*, *Prekeiz bialrouscki*, *Precaz Cazanski*, *Monraazenski Precaz*, and *Dvoski Precaz*. It is untrue to say that all the major posts were allocated to 'insignificant people'. Neuville omits from his list numerous boyars (members of the Sheremetev, Odoevsky, Troekurov and other leading clans) who obtained and retained top positions. On power networks, see R. Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors. The Boyar Elite 1613-1689*, Princeton, 1984, and discussion in Hughes, *Sophia*, pp. 98-101.

60 Fedor Leont'evich Shaklovity (? -1689) was a man of humble origins whose career as a clerk began in the 1670s in Tsar Aleksei's Privy Chancellery and continued in the Chancellery of Crown Service and Appointments (*Razriad*). He emerged as a supporter of Sophia in 1682, and later that year became head of the Chancellery of Musketeers. From then on he remained one of Sophia's most ardent supporters and, rumour would have it, a rival of Vasily Golitsyn for her affections. See L.A.J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 34, pp. 146-48.

d'iak,⁶¹ Emilian Ukraintsev,⁶² the *Malorossiskii Prikaz*,⁶³ to which the affairs of the towns on the Don⁶⁴ are reported. He gave the *Kazna* or great Treasury to the *okol'nichii* Tolochanov⁶⁵ in the *Dvortsovyi Prikaz*, otherwise known as the Ministry of the domains of the royal house. In short, all the ministries previously held by boyar senators, all of whom were men capable of opposing the *vremennik*, or temporary chief minister as they have it, were filled with insignificant people by the prince who occupied this great office and took pleasure in having creatures instead of colleagues.⁶⁶ Such conduct brought on Golitsyn the hatred of the patrician families who found themselves excluded from their prerogatives and obliged to pay court to him as they never had to his predecessors. This hatred did not prevent him from holding on to supreme authority and arranging all affairs to his own advantage. He advised a general peace with the Swedes, whose ambassadors were then in Moscow and who found no opposition to their demands.⁶⁷

Some years after this treaty, the Empire and the Poles were at war with the Turk. The former wanted the Muscovites to enter into a league with them, but their embassy was unsuccessful.⁶⁸

61 BN: 'Domini Diok'. NLB 'Domini Diak'. 1698: 'Dominiak'. The rank of secretary to the council (*dumnyi d'iak*) was the lowest of the four grades in the boyar council, and was usually occupied by career officials from outside the nobility who had trained as clerks.

62 On renderings of the name, see note 35 above.

63 BN: 'Monraazenski Precaz'. We have followed Limonov's reading of 'Malorossiskii' or 'Little Russian' Chancellery.

64 BN, NLB and 1698: 'Tanaïs'.

65 Semen Fedorovich Tolochanov (?–c.1705) served as *pristav* for foreign ambassadors and visitors during the 1660s–70s as well as performing other diplomatic and military duties. A supporter of Sophia, he was Keeper of Regalia and director of the Treasury department (*prikaz kazennogo dvora*) from 1682–86 and was made head of the Chancellery of the Royal Household (*prikaz bol'shogo dvortsa*) in 1687. In 1689 he was sent as governor to Pereiaslavl-Zalesskii.

66 In fact, during Sophia's regency most of the top civil and military posts continued to be occupied, as they had always been, by members of the boyar élite. Membership of the boyar *duma* was expanded in order to accommodate nominees of both the Miloslavsky and the Naryshkin camps. See note 106 below.

67 A reference to the renewal in 1684 of the Treaty of Kardis (1661). Peace with Sweden was a cornerstone of Russian policy from the 1660s as a result of heavy military commitments in the south. It was the 1700 peace with Turkey which finally allowed Peter to declare war against the Swedes.

68 This paragraph probably refers to missions to Moscow by Austrians Johann Hövel in February 1684 and Sebastian Blumberg in May 1684, i.e. in the same year as the Swedish mission mentioned in the previous paragraph, not 'some years after'. Russia's 1686 alliance was with Poland alone. On the Holy League, see Introduction, pp. xiv–xv.

The Poles seized their opportunity and resolved to negotiate a general peace. In order to enlist Muscovy to their side, they sent an embassy to Moscow for that purpose. This was composed of three lords from the Crown and three from Lithuania. The Palatine of Poznan Grzymultowski and the counts Przyjemski and Polowski were those of the Crown, and the Grand Chancellor Oginski, his nephew and a certain count Sapieha were those of Lithuania.⁶⁹ The latter was delayed in Poland by the death of his brother, but the other five fortunately managed to reach Moscow. After several conferences, and even after the audience after which they were due to depart, an agreement was reached. The Poles gave up their claim to the Ukraine, or Land of the Cossacks, to the Duchy of Smolensk and to other lands conquered by the Muscovites, and the tsars undertook to make war on the Perekopites⁷⁰ and to oppose their incursions into Poland. This accord was solemnly celebrated. The ambassadors were entertained and given drink by the emperors themselves through a great lord, after having touched the cup, an honour never previously accorded any diplomat.

Ambassadors from Muscovy were afterwards sent to all the Christian princes to advocate a general alliance against the Turk. The boyar Prince Boris Petrovich Sheremetev⁷¹ was sent to Poland, and from there to Vienna, where all Europe probably knows how his negotiations fared. The *Kniaz'* [Prince] Iakov Fedorovich Dolgoruky,⁷² *spal'nik*, or Gentleman of the Tsars' Bedchamber, was sent to France and Spain. He comes from the oldest family in the land and is enchanted by the manners of the Most Christian King. He says that although his master was insulted in France, he prefers its court to that of Spain, where the tsar's name was

⁶⁹ Krzysztof Grzymultowski (1620–87) and Marcin Aleksander Oginski (1632–90), Grand Chancellor of Lithuania. Oginski was Polish ambassador to Moscow 1685–87. Count Przyjemski is possibly Wladislaw Przyjemski (?–1699), who had served as a musketeer in Louis XIV's army some years earlier. The negotiations took place in February–April 1686. A Treaty of Eternal Peace was signed on 26 April (6 May new style).

⁷⁰ The Crimean Tatars, whose fortress of Perekop guarded the approach from the steppes to the Crimean isthmus.

⁷¹ Boris Petrovich Sheremetev (1652–1719), later field-marshal and count, was one of Peter I's outstanding commanders, winning many victories in the Baltic during the Great Northern War. His mission to Austria in 1687 became bogged down in disputes over titles and diplomatic protocol. Again no treaty with the emperor was signed.

⁷² Prince Iakov Fedorovich Dolgoruky (1639–1720), who took Peter's side in 1682, was a veteran of military, court and diplomatic service. In 1700–11 he was a prisoner of the Swedes. In 1712 he became a senator. His unsuccessful embassy to France took place in 1687. The Russians were insulted by improper use of the tsars' titles, being fobbed off with audiences with a minister rather than the king, not to mention chagrined by the news that 'there had always been enmity between the French and the emperor, but with the Turks lasting peace and a firm alliance'. See Hughes, *Sophia*, pp. 195–96. See also G.E. Munro, entry on Dolgoruky in *MERSH*, vol. 9, pp. 204–07.

better treated. His nephew, whom he left in France to learn the language, is the only Muscovite who speaks French. Only four in that whole, vast country speak Latin, and this is because they have had Polish governors.⁷³ In short, every prince in Europe received an envoy from the tsars.⁷⁴ At this juncture, preparations for the campaign that was due to be mounted in the Crimea in 1687 were being made. The choice of Generalissimus was in doubt for some time. Prince Golitsyn suggested several lords capable of this task, but it was agreed by common accord that since it was he who had made peace with the Poles, he himself should take the trouble to go and see whether the conquest of Perekop was as easy as he said it would be. He did everything he could to avoid accepting this task because he foresaw, being a clever man, that he might find great difficulties in accomplishing it, in which case he would be held responsible. In spite of all the precautions he could take and all the prudence he could exercise, it would be difficult to save his reputation if he did not succeed. While he was being given an army which was formidable in terms of the number of its troops, the latter were only a multitude of peasants, poor soldiers and not battle-hardened. With them he could never take an offensive action and emerge honourably from it. Being a better politician and man of affairs than a captain,⁷⁵ he foresaw that his absence could do him more harm than the conquest of the Crimea would bring him honour and glory, all the more so since he did not aim to elevate himself by this means, nor make himself more highly considered by commanding the armies. He realised that those who insisted loudest that he should take this job were only doing it out of jealousy towards him and in the hope of doing him ill under the false pretence of honouring him with the title of Generalissimus. It is true that the lords who proposed this course of action had not been in favour of the agreement with the Poles. They knew, moreover, just how difficult the enterprise in the Crimea would be. They would be relieved to have Golitsyn agree to leave Moscow and, by his absence, diminish his excessive authority. The weight of votes carried the day, much to Golitsyn's disappointment. He was honour-bound to take on the direction of the expedition, which I will try to relate in the next part of this account.

73 From 'he comes from' to this point is a marginal note in BN and NLB. Later it is claimed that Mikhail Andreevich Golitsyn also knew French.

74 Destinations included Brandenburg-Prussia, Holland, England, Florence (V. Postnikov), Sweden and Denmark (B. Mikhailov) and Venice (I. Volkov). See L.A.J. Hughes, 'V.T. Postnikov's 1687 Mission to London: Anglo-Russian Relations in the 1680s in British sources', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 68 (1990), pp. 447–60.

75 This formula does not appear at this point in BN or NLB, but at the start of the chapter on the second Crimean campaign, where 1698 repeats it. This is suggestive of padding in 1698.



Quale in Augusto fulget Sapientia vultu
 Quantus Monas oculis, quantus in ore, fatis
 Hæc est illa tuis promissa, Ruthenæ, regis,
 Condita ab æternis quæ taceatur ævo
 Nomenis Hæc tutela tui est, quam barbarus hostis
 Sæpius in iaculo, pertinuitque, solo
 Quas concutatas acies ac perfida signa
 Fregit, et indomitus molles corda delati
 Quis ab auspiciis terni corere Monarchæ,
 Fortæque, Adriæus concutit arma Leo
 Quam Pietas, quam Spes divinae conficit ædres,
 Famaque Virgineo conficit alta choro

Iustitiæque tenax animus, rerumque Cuius
 Magnarum, et forte bella movenda, manu
 Etatrix fatis Prudentia, et æmula coelo
 Dextera, manibus prodigiosa suis
 Vivuat magnanimas cæstantia marmora curas,
 Et tot ab Augusta templis decata manu.
 Talis ad Euphratem phœretrata Semiramis altum
 Nobile perpetuas condidit urbis opus
 Tanta erat fœpti decus Elisabethæ Britannæ
 Pulcherram tali mente fuisse ferant
 Sic hinc innumeris fecunda, Ruthenæ, regis,
 Augusta minor et inferiorque, tuis



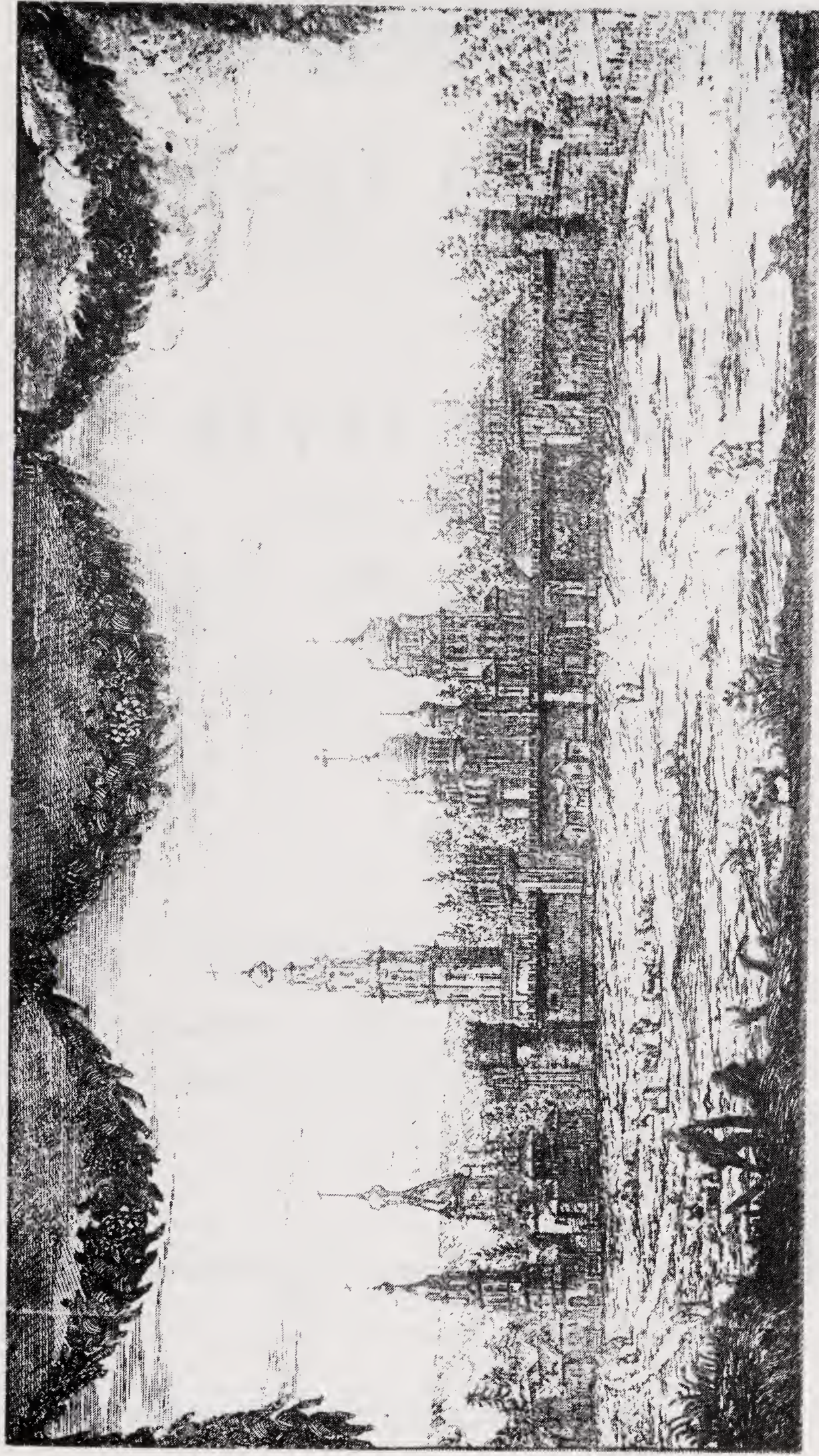
2. PRINCE VASILY GOLITSYN



3. TSARS IVAN AND PETER



4. PETER I OF RUSSIA



5. NEW CONVENT OF THE MAIDENS

...oy de la Neuville

**RELATION
CURIEUSE,
ET NOUVELLE
DÉ
MOSCOVIE.**

CONTENANT,

L'état présent de cet Empire.
Les Expéditions des Moscovites en Crimée, en 1689.
Les causes des dernières Révolutions.
Leurs Mœurs, & leur Religion.
Le Recit d'un Voyage de Spatarus, par terre à la Chine.



A PARIS.

Chez PIERRE AUBOUYN, Libraire de Messieurs les Enfants de France.

ET

CHARLES CLOUZIER, Quay des Augustins
à la Croix d'Or.

AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROT,

M. D. C. X C V I I I.

1
Au Roy.

Sire

Le Marquis de Brethune ayant après sa mise de Suède 1699
que des Suédois, de Suède et de Brandebourg estoient passez.
en Allemagne, Jugea necessaire au service de V^{ostre} Majeste
d'envoyer quelqu'un en ce pays qui pût decouvrir le sujet de la
negociation de ces Ministres. M^{onsieur} de Brethune de m^{es} proposer
cette commission, quoy que j'eusse déjà fait ce voyage, si tant plus
d'avis, suis des soupçons de ces barbares, a ce mot de service de
V^{ostre} M^{ajeste} j'acceptay la proposition, Et priay seulement M^{onsieur}
de Brethune de faire reflexion que l'on ne permit
l'entree de ce pays qu'a des Ministres, Etrangers et des Marchands.

CHAPTER 4

The Muscovite Expedition to the Crimea from 1687 to 1689

After mature consideration, the Muscovites decided in their council of war to send a large army against Lesser Tatar.⁷⁶ Prince Golitsyn was named *Voevoda Bolshoi*,⁷⁷ which is to say Generalissimus. The Boyar Aleksei Semyonovich Shein was named *Voevoda Novgorodskii*, General of the army of Novgorod, the prince Boyar Dmitry Dmitr'evich Dolgoruky *Voevoda Kazanskii*, General of the army of Kazan,⁷⁸ *Kniaz'* or Prince Mikhail Andreevich Golitsyn, *Voevoda Belgorodskii*, General of the army of Belgorod.⁷⁹ He was the elder Golitsyn's cousin. He had such a strong inclination towards foreigners that when he left on his mission he took with him all those who wanted to come, including a Frenchman who taught him the language.⁸⁰

All the armies of White Russia being thus provided with commanders, and the Cossacks having their usual hetman, ways of finding and transporting munitions of war and foodstuffs had to be thought of. All the citizens of the great Empire of the tsars first had to pay a hearth tax of one rouble a year, and the rouble being worth roughly five French crowns, it is easy to imagine the immense sums that were raised.

Prince Golitsyn also secured the acceptance of his son⁸¹ as a colleague into the chancelleries, which was another mark of his standing with the princess.

76 Lesser Tatar lay to the north of the Crimea, between the Dnieper and Donets rivers.

77 BN: 'Woyewoda Bolschoy polk' ('commander of the great regiment').

78 1698 calls Shein general of the army of Kazan and omits Dolgoruky altogether. The printer apparently skipped a line of the MS.

79 BN and NLB continue: 'the *dumnyi dvorianin* Ivan Iur'evich Leont'ev *Voevoda Orel'skii*, General of a small army of Cossacks and other light troops who always march in front of the army of the Generalissimus and whom one could call prodigal children, and the *okol'nichii* Leonty Romanovich Nepliev *Voevoda Sevskii*, General of the army of Sevs'.

80 BN and NLB: 'in six months'. Note Neuville's assertion in the previous chapter that Iakov Dolgoruky's nephew was the only Muscovite who knew French. Prince Mikhail Golitsyn died in 1687.

81 His eldest son, Aleksei (1665–1740), who became a boyar in 1686 and was exiled with his father in 1689.

The rendezvous of all the armies was to be in the Ukraine, in the land of those Cossacks who are independent of the hetman and who are commanded by *polkovniki* or colonels. The army of Moscow was mustered at Akhtyrka, the army of Novgorod at Oskol,⁸² the army of Kazan at Rublovsk,⁸³ the army of Sevsk⁸⁴ at Krasny Kut, and the army of Belgorod, which was to remain at the frontier, was mustered at Belgorod. The hetman assembled his army at Gadiach.⁸⁵ As the general muster had been ordered for the first day of March, the troops marched all through the winter of the year 1686, and arrived there on the first day of May. These massed armies, numbering 300,000 foot soldiers and 100,000 horse, took the field and made camp beyond the river Merlo. After staying there for a few days, they marched in the direction of Poltava, a town owing fealty to the hetman. From there they advanced to Sevsk on the river Arit, where they waited several days for a certain icon of the Virgin which the superstition of the Muscovites had endowed with miraculous powers. A monk assured the generals that he had been blessed with an apparition, and that the Holy Virgin had said that without her the expedition to the Crimea would be useless, and that her icon should be brought to the army. The indulgence of its leaders⁸⁶ and the militia's superstition, to which the Muscovites are more devoted than any other people on earth, halted the army's march for a fortnight. The march was only resumed after the miraculous icon had been welcomed with all the requisite ceremonies. On 13 June they arrived at Samara Reka which, like the other rivers of which we have spoken, flows into the Black Sea. The army left Samara across hastily-constructed bridges on the twentieth, and with the Black Sea still on their right made camp at Tatarska Reka, or River of the Tatars. From Tatarska Reka they went to Moskva Reka, from Moskva Reka to Kamenka, from Kamenka to Konskie Vody, and from Konskie Vody to the Karachakrak, from where the armies could not proceed further, having been halted by the aridity.⁸⁷ They learned with astonishment that this was so extraordinary that for fifty leagues around them the sun's heat had set the countryside ablaze, and that they could not hope for forage.

The Generalissimus, greatly surprised at this piece of news, had to make a decision. He changed the plan he had made to exterminate the khan and his 500,000 men into one of going back the way he had come. Indeed, he left Karachakrak and made camp on the shores of the Black Sea, both in

82 BN, NLB and 1698: 'Auski'.

83 BN, NLB and 1698: 'Roublovski'.

84 BN, NLB and 1698: 'Scarein'.

85 BN, NLB and 1698: 'Galitch'.

86 BN and NLB: 'credulity'. The following clause is in neither.

87 The geography is garbled here, especially the reference to the Moskva river. According to the account of Patrick Gordon the main army reached the Karachakrak river on 16 June.

order to forage whatever the moisture and coolness of the waters had saved from the fire and at the same time to safeguard the retreat, for it was to be feared that the Tatars might fall on the large army. They were encumbered by such a prodigious quantity of baggage that the German officers⁸⁸ swore that there were more than a million horses. The reader will no doubt find this hard to imagine, but it is perhaps nevertheless probable, since with the army of 24,000 men which the king of Poland led to the Black Sea in 1686 there was a baggage-train of more than 45,000 wagons. After that, one can readily believe that men and horses were dying from the excessive heat and the lack of forage. Dysentery added to their woes, and the half-rotten salted fish which the soldier was obliged to eat to keep Lent, which the Russians hold in the month of August, carried off many people, and left an enormous number of others unable to go any further. However, a force of 30,000 men was detached under Leonty Romanovich Nepliev, commander of the army of Sevsk. He was ordered to advance as far as Zaporozhie, the plan being to make the Tatars believe that this was the Muscovites' entire force. The son of the Hetman Ivan Samoilovich⁸⁹ was also sent with a force of Cossacks. The rest of the army retired towards the river Samara, where the prince, having seen how the land lay, proposed to build a town to keep a rein on the Cossacks and even the Tatars, although the latter can enter Russia in several places. By the following year the town had indeed been started, as we will see in due course. From the river Samara they went and made camp on the river Merlo, where they waited for orders from Moscow to disband the army. In the mean time the prince, in order to excuse at court the campaign's lack of success, spared no effort to blame his own failures on the Hetman Ivan Samoilovich. Although this lord was powerful and commanded the whole Ukraine, which rose up against the Poles⁹⁰ during the reign of the late Ladislav,⁹¹ and always has 100,000 militiamen in the field, Golitsyn determined to destroy him. The princess, who had made him powerful, was on his side. He wrote to the court, blamed the hetman for everything and asked for an order for him to be stripped of his post and for permission to have a new hetman elected. No sooner had the order arrived than Golitsyn had him arrested by the very musketeers

88 The Germans were presumably the main source of the Polish memoirs on which, Neuville claims in the next chapter, his account of the Crimean campaigns is based.

89 Ivan Samoilovich (? –1690) became hetman (Cossack commander-in-chief) of Left-Bank (Muscovite) Ukraine in 1672 and was deposed in 1687, as described here. He may well have been used as a scapegoat for the military failure. See L.A.J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 33, pp. 76–79.

90 BN adds: 'because of their cruelty'.

91 Wladislaw (or Ladislav) IV Vasa, king of Poland 1632–48. The rebellion of Cossacks referred to here was led by Bogdan Khmel'nitsky in 1648 and resulted in the incorporation of Left-Bank Ukraine into Muscovy in 1654. The Right Bank (ie West of the river Dnieper) remained under Polish rule until the eighteenth century.

whom he had requested as a bodyguard after falling foul of the Cossacks. He had him taken, tied and gagged, to the part of the grand army called the *shater*, which is to say hall of justice and which, in Muscovite armies, is always located in the General's quarters. In the morning, Golitsyn ordered all the senior officers and the body of nobles to attend on him, and the boyar generals held council. Hetman Samoilovich was brought, the emperor's order was read to him, and he was confronted by the most important Cossacks who had been won over and who accused him of having communicated with the khan and having secretly given orders for the burning of the forage. This poor general then saw that his luck had turned for the worse. Everything was changed, right down to his title of *velmozhnii*, or most powerful, which became *sukin syn*,⁹² or whore's son. Even his servants lost all respect and one of his colonels called Dmitrushka [Raicha] drew his sabre in order to kill him. But Golitsyn stayed the blow, and said that the hetman was there to be judged according to the law and not to be butchered.

The council of war⁹³ being finished and the hetman having been placed under heavy guard, a dispatch was sent to Leonty Romanovich Nepliuev, ordering him to seize Hetman Samoilovich's son, who had been separated from his father. But a few faithful Cossacks had stolen the march and warned the hetman's son, and Nepliuev could only lay hands on him with difficulty, since he was fleeing with his troops as fast as he could. However, he sent the senior Cossacks an order to hand him over. The *kompaneishchiki* or cavalry agreed to give him up, but the *serdiuki* or infantry surrounded his tent and would not allow their commander to be taken. But they allowed themselves to be persuaded, and the hetman's son was handed over to Nepliuev who, glorying in his prey and delighted to have the means to make up for his failure near Kamistan in his encounter with Nuradin-Sultan on the banks of the Dnieper, returned to his headquarters.

While on the one hand the son had been captured, on the other the boyar generals busied themselves degrading the father and naming another hetman. Hetman Samoilovich was banished to Siberia, the Cossacks were assembled for the election, and a certain Mazepa,⁹⁴ *pisar'*, or secretary of

92 BN, NLB and 1698: '*Vielmozny*' and '*Scourvecin*'.

93 BN and NLB: 'session'. This was of course a trial rather than a council of war.

94 Ivan Stepanovich Mazepa (1639?–1709) was educated in Germany, Italy and France, returning to Ukraine in 1663 to serve under the Polish-appointed Right Bank Hetman Doroshenko. In 1674 he transferred his allegiance to Moscow and Hetman Ivan Samoilovich. Mazepa was a controversial character, who continued to waver between Poland, Russia and Turkey in the hope of gaining more independence for Ukraine and power for himself. In 1708 he joined Charles XII against Russia, but was forced to flee to Moldavia after Peter's victory at Poltava in 1709. See entry by J. Cracraft in *MERSH*, vol. 21, pp. 150–54 and T. Mackiv, *English Reports on Mazepa 1687–1709*, New York, 1983.

state, was joyfully proclaimed hetman. This prince is not a handsome man, but is very clever and speaks Latin perfectly. He is a Cossack by birth, was brought up as a page to King Casimir⁹⁵ and was later an officer in his guards. He is also very fond of Poland.

Thus Prince Golitsyn succeeded in his plan, but a large number of Cossacks who had not been invited to the election voiced their discontent. There was a revolt in their towns, and some houses of *polkovniki* or colonels were pillaged in their absence. The new hetman wished to calm these troubles. He asked Prince Golitsyn for troops and was given 3,000 infantrymen from the army of Smolensk, plus 1,000 horses to escort him to Baturin, the hetman's usual residence.

The order to disband the army arrived soon afterwards. The letter from Their Majesties was read in the presence of all the officers, who heard with pleasure praise for the good service they had given. Each general received a gold medal with the figures of the two emperors and the princess on it, attached to a golden chain, the whole being to the value of ten ducats. Each colonel had a medal without a chain worth one ducat, each lieutenant-colonel and major one worth half a ducat, and each soldier and musketeer was given a gold kopeck, which is to say about twenty-five shillings, the silver kopeck being only worth one. Prince Golitsyn pacified certain murmurings against his person among the troops with these presents for the army which he was clever enough to obtain from the tsars or, more accurately, from the princess. Moreover, he won the major nobles to his side by giving them positions which compensated them for their expenses, so that on his return to Moscow he found no one against him. He was received by the princess with all the expressions of joy he could have hoped for, and resumed the responsibilities of state with more authority than he had enjoyed before.

The first thing which Golitsyn suggested to the Council was how useful it would be to build a town on the river Samara, where stores and all sorts of munitions could be kept. This having been agreed upon, the *okol'nichii* Leonty Romanovich Nepliev was given orders to lead 30,000 men to build the town. The hetman and his troops were ordered to do the same. After the design was produced by a Dutch colonel called Vansale, the troops were mustered in the town of Ryl'sk,⁹⁶ arriving in Samara on the last day of May [1688]. The town was up in a month, for it was little more than a fort to stop the Tatars and the Cossacks. It was given the name Novobogoroditskoe, or Our Lady the New. The army withdrew, leaving a garrison behind. The *okol'nichii*, in consideration of the services he had performed, was made a boyar.⁹⁷ It was recognised in the

95 Jan II Kazimierz (John Casimir) Vasa, king of Poland 1648–68.

96 BN and NLB: 'Riski'; 1698: 'Niski'.

97 In December 1688.

campaign of 1689 that this town was of great usefulness thanks to its stores of all sorts of provisions, for which the troops were very grateful.

CHAPTER 5

The Muscovites' Campaign or Expedition to the Crimea in 1689

Prince Golitsyn noticed that Peter's party was becoming more active with each day that passed and feared that his position would not be strengthened by his absence. So he tried all the secret means he could to make the command of the army for this campaign fall on someone other than him. But finding this plan too fraught with difficulty, he took the politic decision to propose himself, cleverly reasoning that it would be much more honourable for him to offer himself for the task with good grace than to wait to be forced to accept it. He arranged everything so that he could put right the mistakes he had made during the first campaign, for this prince was a better politician than captain. Having easily obtained what he had asked for, it was deemed advisable to dispatch the army sooner than had been done on the first campaign, whose lack of success had been due to haste. The order was therefore that the army should arrive at the assembly point on 1 February. It was carried out punctually. In the month of December, the troops marched from everywhere except for the kingdom of Siberia which is exempt from providing soldiers due to the war it is forced to wage against the peoples of Great Tartary, its neighbour.⁹⁸ The preparations were more extensive than those for the previous campaign, but the people were taxed no more heavily because of this, for only the one rouble that was normally levied per household was asked. The army of Moscow was mustered at Sumy, that of Novgorod at Ryl'sk, that of Kazan at Bogodukhov, that of Belgorod at Kamenka,⁹⁹ that of Sevsk at Kalantar, and all these armies were commanded by the same lords who had served in the first campaign, except for the army of Belgorod which was commanded by Boris Petrovich Sheremetev, who had been given the commission after the death of Mikhail Andreevich Golitsyn. The armies were not long in their quarters, for Prince Golitsyn ordered them to march before the ice broke up to the other side of the river Merlo. This was prudent, because several of the rivers that had to be crossed on their march cause considerable floods during the thaw. The infantry camped on the other side of the river at the edge of a wood. The cavalry was posted to the towns along the bank. Having waited for the thaw, the prince raised his

⁹⁸ BN: 'the Chinese'.

⁹⁹ BN: 'Katiminski'.

standard on the other side of the river. On the first day of April all the other generals did the same, and on the sixth they marched towards Samara, where all the armies mustered.

Hetman Mazepa came as well. On the thirteenth of the month the river was crossed, and without waiting they marched to Perekop where they arrived after a month on the road. The baggage prevented them from marching all day, as each soldier carried with him provisions for four months, besides what had been given out at Samara. And in the deserts which the army crossed they found that the abundance of the munitions made their progress more difficult. The artillery, composed of 700 cannon and a large number of mortars, contributed still further to making the army march slowly. Finally the army arrived at Karachakrak where it made camp. The horses were let loose in the fields, whose grass was too short to be scythed. The soldiers rested until midnight. At about that time they were alarmed to hear a noise outside the camp which the whinnying of horses mingled with the cries of men made frightful. They thought that they had been ambushed by Tatars, but discovered that it was frightened horses running this way and that which had caused the disorder. The next day they found that 6,000 horses from the army of Moscow had been lost. Although their legs were tied, they had run off towards the desert. It was necessary to remain there in order to give everyone time to look for the horses, a great many of whom were brought back to the camp. The next day they struck camp, and after several days arrived beside the Black Sea at a place called Kairka. There a raiding party caught some Muscovite Tatars, from whom it was learned that the khan was not in Perekop but at Budzhac, and that this formidable army was not even expected. In truth, the Turks had heard that troops were on the march, but they thought that this was for the purpose of building,¹⁰⁰ as had been done the year before, and they had been sent by Kalga-Sultan to get news of them.

After Kairka the army camped at Kairka Meshezna, where Prince Golitsyn ordered that every waggon should be loaded with faggots, four stakes and water, because they would not find any more wood on their way. They marched away from the Black Sea into the interior, all the way to Perekop, and the army went two days without water. On 13 May, scouts who had left in mid-morning reported that the enemy was in sight, and they prepared to receive them. The baggage-train, protected by the infantry and by cannon, marched on the right of each army corps, and the cavalry and the nobility held the left.

The army of Moscow commanded by Prince Golitsyn was in the centre, the army of Novgorod on the right, the hetman on the left, and to the hetman's left were Sheremetev and Dolgoruky, with Nepliev leading the rearguard. The Tatars fell upon Shein's advance guard, from where, after

¹⁰⁰ BN: 'a few towns'.

a few skirmishes, they suddenly turned from the right to the left and attacked Sheremetev's army, which was the smallest and which was routed in a moment. The cavalry gave ground, and the enemy charged the baggage-train, almost managing to carry it away. But Prince Golitsyn had immediately sent reinforcements to Sheremetev and the Tatars were obliged to retreat, leaving the way open to Chernaia Dolina.¹⁰¹ Here, five leagues from Perekop, the armies made camp because of the ample water supply. The spot, being marshy, provided pasture for the area's livestock. A small body of Tatars commanded by Kalga-Sultan advanced to reconnoitre the army's progress and, anxious to find out how strong or weak the force was, took several prisoners, from whom they extracted all the information they desired. Afterwards these were taken to the khan who was only three leagues from the camp, at Kalanchak, a small river two leagues from Perekop whose source is in the desert and which flows into the Palus Meotis or Sea of Azov.¹⁰² It should be understood that when the Muscovites' advance was reported to the khan, he had come from Budzhac with 4,000 horsemen to defend his land. He had arrived at Kalanchak two days before the Muscovites, and crossed the Black Sea at Aslan Kermen, a town on the river belonging to the Turks. On the 16th of that month the army broke camp to march on Zelenaia Dolina, which is one league from Chernaia Dolina. The khan blocked the Muscovites' path with his whole force, which, it could be speculated, might have amounted to 30 or 40,000 footsoldiers in several corps. The army found itself gradually surrounded by Tatars and was obliged to halt. The two sides watched each other without moving,¹⁰³ and although the Muscovites were supposed to be on the offensive, they contented themselves with maintaining this surveillance. Surrounded by good *chevaux-de-frise* which had been brought in the waggons and which then served to defend them, the armed infantry and all the artillery made the camp a safe haven which the Tatars could not take by storm. The cavalry was outside the fortifications, which inspired three or four detachments of Tatars, each about 1,000 horses strong, to fall upon it. The rout closely followed the attack, and the baggage-train was of great help to the disoriented cavalry. At least 300 or 400 Tatars, which the musketry supported by cannon had unhorsed, could be counted, and on this occasion a number of Muscovites were also killed by their own side. However, on the other side the Tatars, commanded by Nuradin-Sultan, charged the Sumy and Akhtyrka¹⁰⁴ Cossacks, who were led by Emilian

101 BN: 'Tehorna Doliva', NLB 'Thorna-Doliva', 1698 'Thorna-d'Oliva'. Chernaia Dolina = Black Valley.

102 BN and NLB: 'le pont Euxin' (= the Black Sea). Neuville's apparent confusion over the names of the two seas led Charykov, *Posol'stvo*, p. 506, to conclude that he was poorly educated.

103 1698: 'without emotion'. The printer seems to have misread 'sans se mouvoir' as 'sans s'émouvoir'.

104 BN: 'Kiev'.

Ukraitsev *dumnyi d'iak*, or secretary of state. This commander had little talent for war, and as such was a true Muscovite. He panicked so much that he could not resist the enemy's efforts. The baggage-train was penetrated, and the many horses that were killed deprived the army of its means of escape. The Tatars, having fought their way to the middle of the waggons, took away with them twenty cannon which they found mounted and hitched up. Thus, if the Boyar Dolgoruky had not advanced with his army, all the Cossacks would have been cut to pieces.

Sheremetev was attacked at the same time by another group of Tatars which penetrated as far as the baggage, but to speak the truth he withstood the assault more vigorously than Ukraitsev and finally forced the Tatars to retire. He did his duty very well on that occasion, being personally courageous and a man of worth. But he was also the mortal enemy of Golitsyn, who would not have been unhappy for him to be beaten and to be rid of him. That would have happened had he not promptly been assisted.¹⁰⁵ The fighting was ended by the Tatars retreating, although they had gained both an advantage and booty. The armies needed to look for water, so they decamped the next day and proceeded to Kalanchak. As it had not been found advantageous for the Muscovite cavalry to ride away from the baggage-train, they were ordered to stay among the lines of waggons. And all the armies which had until then marched separately joined together in one body of more than 200,000 waggons in square formation. The baggage was, as we have said, surrounded by cannon and all the infantry who, so as to be ready to defend themselves, carried the *chevaux-de-frise* on their shoulders. As they were marching in this way, the Tatars appeared once more, and having circled the whole army in the expectation of finding the cavalry outside the waggons, they had to be satisfied with frightening the Muscovites, and disappeared to go and prepare the defences of Perekop, which they thought would be attacked by this huge army. The same day camp was made at Kalanchak, and the day after the river was forded without any Tatars being seen. This emboldened several Muscovites enough for them to stray from the waggons and climb up on promontories so that they could see Perekop. It appeared to be smoking from the blaze of the town's suburbs, fires which the Tatars had lit themselves for fear that the suburbs might be seized. On 19 May the army marched straight to Perekop and camped within cannon range of the town, so that it had the Black Sea on its right and the desert on its left. They did not fire on the town since the distance was too great, but cannon were constantly fired at a tower which was on the shore. It was 10 or 11 in the morning when they arrived, and they hoped to attack the Perekop, or trench, by night. But on parade in the evening they were very surprised to learn that

¹⁰⁵ These two sentences paraphrase a marginal note in BN and NLB which appears to refer not to Sheremetev but to Ukraitsev.

they would be departing the next day. As this retreat was extraordinary, it is advisable to tarry a little over what caused it.

Because the army was camped quite close to the town, the Nogay Tatar and Kalmyk scouts, who are the Muscovites' subjects, skirmished with the Perekopites. A Nogay in the khan's service recognised a Nogay in Muscovite service by chance and shouted to him from a distance in their own language: 'Why are we fighting each other? Why don't you tell your boyar to make peace with the khan?' The Muscovite replied that if the boyar trusted the khan he might agree, but if the khan wanted peace he could send people to negotiate it. 'Alright', said the Perekopite Nogay, 'speak to your boyar or general and assure him that if he wants peace the khan will give it him.' The Nogay Tatar went first to the Boyar Golitsyn to report all that the Tatar had said to him, and he found this general disposed to enter into negotiations and retire without combat. So Golitsyn had a letter written in the name of this Tatar to the one who had spoken to him, and which read: 'I have reported what you said to the boyar Golitsyn. He would be happy to come to an arrangement whereby someone be sent to set out the khan's motives and demands.' This letter having been given to the first Tatar who appeared, it was taken to the khan, whom the Tatar found in reflective mood and consulting with the murzas about how to deliver themselves from so many enemies. No sooner had the khan read it than he sent a message asking whether the letter had been written at the Boyar Golitsyn's instruction. When it was reported to him that indeed it had, he sent Suleshev Murza, and the Muscovites gave as a hostage a lord named [Venedikht] Zmeev. The conflicting interests were discussed back and forth, and the Muscovites proposed the five following conditions: that all Russian slaves should be returned; that the Tatars should make no more raids on the tsar's dominions; that they should renounce their claim to the 80,000 pounds¹⁰⁶ they drew from the Muscovite treasury; that they should leave the Poles in peace; and that they should not give any help whatsoever to the Turk. Suleshev Murza wanted to keep the Muscovites talking until the next day and, aware that such a multitude could not remain long without forage or water, prolonged the negotiations and was content to hold out some prospect of an agreement. The next day he replied that the khan would except no other terms than those he already enjoyed with the tsar: that he demanded the annual payment of the tribute, and that he desired the 240,000 pounds¹⁰⁷ due for the three previous years. This reply did not please Prince Golitsyn, and not thinking it wise to remain any longer amid the sand he turned his attention towards retreat. Fear of pursuit made him take the murza who was in his camp all the way to Kalanchak.

¹⁰⁶ BN: '8,000 pounds a year'.

¹⁰⁷ Figure from BN. 1698 has 24,000 in error. Limonov, p. 501, '240,000'.

He sent him back from there and recovered his own hostage. There, in a few words, you have the whole Crimean campaign.

The army marched for three weeks before reaching the Samara where, having first left anything that was heavy, it crossed the river and six days later arrived at the river Merlo. Prince Golitsyn had, notwithstanding, sent dispatches to the tsar and to the king of Poland in which he boasted of having beaten the Tatars and chased them back into their own country. At this news, the princess of Muscovy ordered public rejoicing throughout the realm and, as custom demanded, sent an *okol'nichii* with a letter of praise to the whole army and gold ducats as a token of thanks. After this, orders having been received to disband the troops, Boyar Volynsky,¹⁰⁸ *voevoda* of Novobogoroditskoe, was left on the river Samara with an army corps of roughly 5–6,000 men. That is all the success that the two great Muscovite expeditions to the Crimea had. Far from bringing honour or profit, as you may well judge, they caused, on the contrary, the greatest loss that the nation could ever suffer by the disgrace of their general, which happened a little while after his return.¹⁰⁹

I learned everything that I have just said from the king of Poland's ministers who have resided at the tsars' court and followed their armies from the death of Tsar Fedor until the present day. It only remains for me to detail those things which I myself witnessed, as I often dared to go through the city in disguise, and even went to the Trinity Monastery.

108 Ivan Fedorovich Volynsky?

109 The last two sentences do not appear in BN or NLB.

CHAPTER 6

An Account of the Revolution

On his arrival in Moscow, Prince Golitsyn did not find things in the state he might have hoped for. His enemies had found out the truth of the matter, and complained about him to Tsar Peter Alekseevich. He was refused an audience, and it was only at the princess's entreaty that he was admitted in order to kiss the tsar's hand. He had to endure bitter reproaches, and did not manage to justify his conduct. After a few days had passed peacefully enough for Golitsyn, the princess's liberality brought about a new test. She wished to distribute considerable wealth among the boyars in recognition of the services to the Empire they had performed. But the tsar was against this, and wished to scrutinise the quality of the services rendered and to apportion the rewards accordingly.

The princess, not wanting to be worsted, made such a fuss that she obtained the tsar's consent to do what she desired. She therefore gave Prince Golitsyn 1,500 peasant households in different villages, to the other boyar army chiefs 300 each, and rewarded the remaining general officers, proportionately to their responsibilities. She even rewarded all the gentlemen who had served, with the intention of allying all these people to her party. Such gifts had never previously been a feature of Muscovite practice, and from time immemorial the tsar had been satisfied with giving a royal coat¹¹⁰ to those he had seen fit to honour. This prince governed with all his usual authority and, with the princess's support, undertook an audacious stroke. Ever since the hetmans had been under Muscovite domination, none of them had ever entered Moscow. On the pretext of securing for the hetman the honour of paying his respects to the tsars, but actually for a quite different purpose, Golitsyn arranged for Hetman Mazepa to come, accompanied by 500 of his senior officers. At that time Tsar Peter was at one of his pleasure-houses called Preobrazhenskoe, which was on the river Iauza¹¹¹ and barely a league from Moscow. Not having been able to obtain the Muscovites' permission to see Mazepa while he was in Moscow, several times I risked going to his residence at night in disguise and accompanied by the tsars'

¹¹⁰ Costly kaftans or robes in rich fabrics were often given as gifts by the tsars, but so were serf villages. Sophia was not doing anything new, although the scale of her rewards was lavish.

¹¹¹ BN, NLB and 1698: 'Yarus'.

German doctor in order to assure him of the king of Poland's protection. Meanwhile in Moscow itself Golitsyn was hatching a plot, the details of which we shall now reveal.

The princess, who had always known that the life of Tsar Peter would one day be a stumbling block for her power and a dangerous reef for her if she did not soon remedy the situation, repented of having followed Golitsyn's wise and civilised advice. She thought of the trouble she had had to get him a very disagreeable reception. She was stung by this and by all the reproaches which had been levelled at him, notwithstanding that she had obtained Peter's consent to distribute the gifts and largesse which she had wanted. She knew how dearly she had bought this pleasure in frustrations and difficulties, which she had felt more than another person because she had governed and controlled the whole state at her whim, without gainsay. For several years she wisely judged that in the future she would no longer be able to act in the same way, and that the best she could hope for would be to see her authority gradually diminish as her brother's grew. She convinced herself with a great deal of justification that this was the reason why he had not absolutely refused her wishes. Instead of deferring to her, people would take pleasure in causing her sorrow. The members of her brother's party would be at pains to do so. They would destroy and ruin her creatures and then make her, because of all the chagrins she would have, give up the contest and retire to a convent. These thoughts made the princess, who was ambitious and daring beyond her sex, resolve to do anything to maintain herself in her current position, which she had always planned to occupy. During her regency, she had done her best to acquire creatures. It was with this thought that she had just distributed yet more gifts and largesse on the pretext of recognising the services which they had given the state. She thought that her rewards would have a much greater effect on the minds of those who would receive them than the honour which the tsar could do them by giving them a coat as his predecessors were accustomed to do. She made Prince Golitsyn understand that he should beware lest their enemies might not be content to ruin her reputation little by little, but would perhaps go still further and force her to retire to her convent against her wishes. That could not happen without her taking him, his family and his friends after her in her fall. He could not resist all these reasons and although he was prudent and wise and naturally opposed to all entreaties to violence, he no longer opposed her plan. He only asked that before she undertook the deed he should send his eldest son to Poland on the pretext of an embassy with the larger portion of his wealth. There he would be safe from the storm which Golitsyn knew would break and of which he sensibly could not believe the murder would be the end. But the princess's impatience won the day. She remonstrated with him that there was not a moment to lose and that this was a needless precaution, as they were sure that their plan would succeed. After all the

measures she had for so long taken, she took one final resolution to get rid of Peter and¹¹² entrusted this task to a certain Fedor Shaklovity, president of the Chancellery of Musketeers and a man who, because of the princess's support, had risen from a humble scribe to be an *okol'nichii*, or swordbearer, the rank immediately below that of boyar senator.

Fedor promised to carry out the princess's order faithfully. He assembled in the Kremlin, the tsar's and the patriarch's residence, and where all the courts of justice are located, he assembled, I say, 600 loyal musketeers under the command of a Colonel Rozanov. Fedor, placing himself at their head, persuaded them to follow him to Preobrazhenskoe. But while he was disposing his forces two of the musketeers, suffering pangs of conscience, resolved not to stain their hands with the prince's blood and, having slipped away, hastened to warn Tsar Peter¹¹³ who, utterly surprised, rose from his bed, alerted his uncles, brothers and mother, and hurriedly took counsel as to what should be done.

It was decided to send someone to the city so as to ascertain the truth of the matter. One of the tsar's uncles and Prince Boris Golitsyn were dispatched and, meeting Shaklovity at the head of the musketeers on the way, they drew aside to let them pass and then overtook them in order to save the tsar. Poor Peter only just had time quickly to get into a carriage with his mother, his wife and his sisters and, followed by his most faithful servants, he fled in the direction of the Trinity Monastery.

Upon their arrival, the conspirators looked everywhere for the tsar, but the musketeers of this prince's bodyguard, being ignorant of the affair and surprised at his flight, told their president, or grand judge, only that His Majesty had departed in great haste.

Having missed his chance, Shaklovity returned the next day to the princess, whom he found no less upset than himself at the failure of the enterprise. The flight caused much astonishment in Moscow. No one could guess what had provoked it, but by evening it became known that Tsar Peter had sent word to the princess accusing her of perfidy, that she had, however, denied everything, claiming that a mistake had been made in taking the musketeers for conspirators when they had only come to relieve the guard, and that a great wrong had been done her by those who supposed her soul so black that she would have even thought of her brother's removal. The pretext of relieving the guard seemed weak to many people because it was normally changed by day, and these

¹¹² From the beginning of the paragraph to this point is not in BN or NLB.

¹¹³ BN: 'of the danger which threatened him. They addressed themselves to Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn, a close relative of the Golitsyn of whom we have spoken, and straight away he warned Tsar Peter.' Peter's well-attested flight in his nightshirt occurred on the night of 7–8 August, 1689.

particular musketeers had arrived at Preobrazhenskoe by night. Whatever the case, after he arrived at the Trinity Monastery Tsar Peter wrote instructing all boyars to present themselves to him without delay. He also wrote to all the nobles and sent orders to all towns to hold their militia in readiness to support him. The whole Empire having been thus alerted to Shaklovity's attack, people flocked to him from all parts of the realm, and in less than a week he had large numbers of nobles with him. He sent Prince Golitsyn an order to come immediately to the Trinity, but this boyar excused himself by saying that Tsar Ivan was detaining him.

In the mean time, the princess was doing her best to enlist to her party the musketeers whom Peter was trying to win over. She called together all the *piatidesiatniki* and *desiatniki* or commanders of fifty and ten men who, better than colonels and other officers, have on such occasions great influence over their soldiers' wills, and having mustered them at the bottom of the staircase, she and Tsar Ivan, leaving Mass, halted on the top step. The tsar said: 'My brother has withdrawn to the Trinity Monastery and I do not know why. He no doubt intends to upset the running of the state, and I have even heard it said that he has ordered you to go to him, but in order to avoid the unpleasant consequences that might result from this we forbid you under pain of death to obey his order.'¹¹⁴

The princess lent her support to this injunction, but the musketeers took little notice. They went to the Trinity to assure Tsar Peter of their loyalty. Having thought this over and being moreover aware that the majority of the boyars had joined Peter, the princess decided to treat with him. In pursuance of this she sent to him two of her aunts, her father's sisters, Princess Anna Mikhailovna,¹¹⁵ and one of her sisters, Maria Alekseevna.

Before proceeding further it should be explained that the princess's regency had given several other princesses of the tsar's house the desire to leave the convent as she had done and live, like her, in the imperial palace.¹¹⁶ She had tolerated this during her regency, for fear that the reasons and precedents that she could cite to prevent them might rebound on herself, and that those who envied her or who were displeased by her government might make use of them to force her to return to the convent. Besides those whom we have just mentioned are Evdokia or Dorothea,

¹¹⁴ In the much fuller account of the speech delivered to the musketeers in the Kremlin in Gordon's diary, Sophia herself is the orator.

¹¹⁵ BN has: 'Anna Mikhailovna, Tat'iana Mikhailovna, and ...'

¹¹⁶ It is true that none of the daughters of the seventeenth-century tsars married, probably in order to minimise claims to preferment by sons-in-law, and that they were kept in strict seclusion, but they were not forced to become nuns. Sophia herself had never lived in a convent, even though she was a benefactress of several. Fear of being driven *back* to the convent is an invented motive for her actions, although she knew that confinement in a nunnery was a standard way of dealing with troublesome women.

Catherine, Sophia, Maria, Feodosia or Theodora, all from the same marriage and sisters by both mother and father of Tsar Ivan Alekseevich, their mother being a Miloslavsky.¹¹⁷ Tsar Peter and Princess Natalia are of the second marriage to a lady of the house of Naryshkin.¹¹⁸ Tsar Ivan's wife is from the house of Saltykov. She disappointed those who expected¹¹⁹ her to bear a son by giving birth to a daughter.¹²⁰ Peter is married to a lady of the house of Lopukhin named Marfia or Martha.¹²¹ This princess was so frightened at being forced to flee in order to follow her husband by night and virtually naked in order to avoid being killed, which would have happened had it not been for the warning that the younger Golitsyn received, that she suffered a still birth a few days later. But she redeemed herself by giving birth to a prince last February, which was a mortal blow for the princess's party.

To return to the subject in hand, the princess's two aunts and her sister went to the Trinity Monastery with the intention of reconciling their nephew with their niece. When they reached the spot which served as the tsar's retreat, they begged him not to pay any heed to the rumours that had frightened him. They assured him that it had all been a simple misunderstanding in this matter, saying that people were maliciously trying to cause a quarrel between brother and sister, and that he could safely return to Moscow. Tsar Peter showed these ladies that his terror had not been panic, and that someone had really tried to kill his mother, his wife, his uncles and himself. And he pointed out to them so many circumstances concerning the attack that his aunts were no longer able to

¹¹⁷ Tsar Aleksei's first wife was Maria Miloslavskaia (1626–69). Her thirteen children were: Dmitry (1648–50); Evdokia (1650–1712); Marfa (1652–1707); Aleksei (1654–70); Anna (1655–59); Sophia (1657–1704); Ekaterina (1658–1718); Maria (1660–1723); Fedor (1661–82); Feodosia (1662–1713); Simeon (1655–69); Ivan (1666–96) and Evdokia (1669).

¹¹⁸ Tsar Aleksei married his second wife, Natalia Kirillovna Naryshkina (1651–94), in 1671. Their children were: Peter (1672–1725); Natalia (1673–1716); and Fedora (1674–78).

¹¹⁹ BN and NLB: 'those who had made her become pregnant in order to have a son'.

¹²⁰ Praskovia Fedorovna Saltykova (1664–1723). They had five daughters, the first of whom, Maria, was born in May 1689. Their daughter Anna (1693–1740) reigned as empress from 1730–40.

¹²¹ BN, NLB and 1698 refer to 'Marfia Loukina', but Peter's first wife was in fact Evdokia Fedorovna Lopukhina (1669–1731). They were married in Moscow on 7 January 1689. Evdokia and her family were said to favour traditional Muscovite values, which is why Peter's mother chose her. While abroad in 1697–98 Peter decided to get rid of his wife. In 1699 he forced her to take the veil as Elena in the convent of the Intercession in Suzdal. After the death of Catherine I, her successor as Peter's wife, in 1727, and the accession of her grandson Peter II, she was able to return to Moscow and play some part in politics. The story of the still birth, which appears in no other source, is implausible, given the well-attested arrival of her son Aleksei Petrovich in February 1690.

disagree with him over the facts. Then these princesses began to cry, and protested that they had no part in the horrible conspiracy, swearing not to return to Moscow, but to live or die with him. Princess Sophia, having got wind of the negotiations' lack of success, and not knowing what to do next, addressed herself to the patriarch, told him of her sorrow, and made such an impression on him that he offered to work for their reconciliation. He left that very day, explained the subject of his visit to Tsar Peter and said everything which you can imagine to bring harmony back into the family. But he was extremely surprised to find that the conspiracy was also aimed at himself, and that the *igumen*, or Father [Abbot] Silvester¹²² was in on it, and, if the plan had succeeded, would have had himself named patriarch.

This piece of news greatly stupefied the good man, and he thought he might do worse than to stay at the Trinity until things had been cleared up and calmed down. At the same time he made a public declaration demanding the arrest of the traitors.

The doubly-afflicted princess called the members of her party together and consulted with them as to what should be done.¹²³ It was decided that the *okol'nichii* Shaklovity should be held in the palace and that Father Silvester should be saved. She then set out herself with Prince Golitsyn and their friends to try and appease her brother, who for his part had sent a second order to the musketeers to immediately attend upon him and to bring him the traitors. She was not yet halfway there when the boyar Troekurov, purposely sent by Tsar Peter to meet her, told her to turn back the way she had come and assured her that she would not be received.¹²⁴

The princess decided to go no further for fear of an angry reception from her brother, and returned to Moscow. The next day, the musketeers and the Germans all went to the Trinity Monastery. The boyars assembled there and together resolved to send someone to capture the traitors wherever they might be. Colonel Sergeev, who led 300 men, was given

¹²² Silvester Medvedev (1641–91) came to Moscow in 1665 and entered the school run by the poet and theologian Father Simeon Polotsky (he was not a Pole, as Neuville claims in the next chapter). Subsequently he took monastic vows and became Polotsky's disciple and from 1680 his successor as court poet and publisher. Like his teacher, he clashed with the conservative Patriarch Joachim, and in the 1680s headed a 'Latinist' group of churchmen who tended towards Catholic interpretations of such matters as transubstantiation. He was an avid supporter of Sophia, to whom he composed eulogistic verses. There is little substance to Neuville's allegations of his designs on the patriarchate or to the suggestion that Joachim was 'stupefied'. The two had been enemies throughout the regency and Joachim was no doubt glad of a pretext to be rid of his more intelligent opponent. See L. A. J. Hughes, *MERSH*, vol. 21, pp. 181–82.

¹²³ 1698: 'what it was all about'. This appears to be a simple misreading by the printer ('avoir à faire' becomes 'avoir affaire').

¹²⁴ BN: 'not be well received'.

this mission, and thereupon left for Moscow. No sooner had he arrived than he went straight to the imperial palace. There he loudly demanded that a certain Fedka Shaklovity be handed over to him, for since his treason had been discovered he was no longer called Fedor or Theodore, but by the diminutive, which is a term of abuse among the Russians.

At first the princess put up some resistance. The colonel persisted to such an extent that the princess, seeing that she had been abandoned (and considering, moreover, the consequences of any refusal), handed Fedka and his followers over to the colonel. These criminals were taken in chains on a common cart to the Trinity Monastery.

Elsewhere, Prince Golitsyn saw that his own fortunes were about to be reversed and was doing all that he could to prevent it. He decided to go to the monastery as well. He was accompanied there by his son Aleksei, his colleague Tolochanov, *dvoretskii* or Master of the Tsars' Household, [Aleksei Ivanovich] Rzhevsky, the grand Treasurer, Nepliuev, the governor of Sevsk, his advisor and favourite, Zmeev, his creature, who had held the post of Commissioner General in the army, and by a certain friend of his called [Grigory] Kosogov. But the gate of the monastery was shut to him and his retinue, and after entry had been refused him, a guard was placed on himself and on his companions and an order sent for them not to leave his quarters.

As soon as Fedka arrived he was brought to a large room where the tsar had assembled his boyars. He was interrogated there for four hours, whence he was taken to a tower of the aforementioned monastery where he was tortured, or rather given a good hiding.¹²⁵ So his hands were tied behind his back, he was suspended in the air, and the torturer struck him blows with a whip of the same length as, but differently made from, a coachman's, the straps of which were made of thick, hard leather and bit deep into his flesh, causing him extraordinary agony. The name of this torture is knouts. The patient is attached to the back of a strong man by the legs and rests his hands on a sort of bench at head height. In this position the condemned man receives 200 or 300 strokes of the whip more or less on his back. The end of the whip strikes below the neck from one shoulder to the other. The executioner strikes so accurately that every blow removes a strip of skin the width of the whip,¹²⁶ from which most people die or are left crippled. After he had endured a few of these blows, he admitted that he had been ordered to kill the dowager empress, the tsar and his three brothers. They were satisfied with this confession and he was sent back to prison.

125 The last clause is not in BN or NLB.

126 BN and NLB: 'and the length of the back'.

From there he wrote to Tsar Peter and acquainted him with all the details of the matter. He claimed to him that he had been forced into this cruel enterprise, whose authors he named. Although the tsar was convinced of his sister's barbarity, he did not wish publicly to dishonour a princess of his own house, and Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn then had to use all his credit in the tsar's eyes to persuade him not to sully the honour of his family by the execution of his cousin, the prince whose name we have already mentioned.

Afterwards, seven other scoundrels who were supposed to carry out the massacre were examined. They were given torture, or extraordinary interrogation, which is even crueller than the former. They shaved their heads and tied and gagged them. Then they dripped boiling water on their skulls drop by drop. This caused them such a sharp pain and made them suffer such violent agonies that they immediately admitted their guilt and named the authors of the plot and the conspirators,¹²⁷ after the same confession from Fedka. Two days were spent deciding what to do with the criminals. Prince Golitsyn, his son and his friends were condemned to exile. The sentence was announced to him by a secretary of state at the foot of the steps. He listened to it standing, surrounded by the guards who had brought him from his quarters, and here are the terms in which it was framed: 'You are ordered by the tsar to travel to Karga, a town near the Pole,¹²⁸ and to remain there for the rest of your days, far from and disgraced by His Majesty, whose goodness is however such that he accords you three shillings a day for your subsistence. Justice demands that all your goods be confiscated by the treasury.' The unhappy prince, having bowed and only replied that it was hard to justify himself before his master, withdrew and was conducted to his place of exile by a colonel under orders. A secretary of state was sent to Moscow to seize his palace and to make an inventory of all that was in it.

There were found: many very rich furnishings, 100,000 ducats in a chest buried in the cellar and which are believed to have been plundered from Hetman Ivan Samoilovich, 400 *puds* of silverware, one *pud* weighing 40 pounds, and several sorts of silver coin.¹²⁹ The wife of this miserable prince and that of his son were sent into the same exile, but they were not

127 The two preceding sentences do not appear in BN or NLB.

128 BN, NLB and 1698 have this understandably erroneous reading of the town of Kargopol' in Archangel province. Voltaire uncharitably seizes on this misunderstanding in his *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre-le-grand* (1759–63): 'There is no town near the pole. Karga is at 62 degrees of latitude, only six and a half degrees more northerly than Moscow. The man who wrote the sentence must have been a bad geographer. It is claimed that Neuville was misled by an inaccurate report'. See Introduction p.xxix.

129 The *pud* is actually equivalent to just over thirty-six pounds. The inventory referred to survives, with detailed descriptions of Golitsyn's estates. See L.A.J. Hughes, *Russia and the West*, pp. 94–96.

permitted to take anything with them, and thirty¹³⁰ roubles was the sum allocated to the two wives and the two husbands.

After Golitsyn had been sent on his way, the boyar Leonty Romanovich¹³¹ Nepliuev *voevoda Sevskii* was brought to the foot of the steps. He was ordered to travel to Pustozersk,¹³² a still more northerly town than Kargopol', and to remain there to the end of his days. It was furthermore explained to him that for having wished to bring about the ruin of the tsar's government he had forever forfeited his good graces, and that his possessions were confiscated. Venedikht Andreevich Zmeev was ordered to hold onto their goods until otherwise instructed. Kosogov was stripped of all his offices and confined to his estates. Master of the Household Tolochanov was named for life *voevoda* of Novobogoroditskoe on the river Samara.

The next day Fedka was executed. His head was chopped off on the block. The two musketeers who were supposed to be the murderers in the attack were punished by the same form of execution. The colonel who was supposed to command the detachment suffered a thrashing with the knout and had his tongue cut out. He was dispatched to Siberia for the rest of his life with one shilling a day to spend. The other five musketeers also had¹³³ their tongues cut out and were sent to Siberia to kill Siberian marten.

When all these executions were over, Tsar Peter informed the princess, and requested that she leave the palace and retire to the convent which she had had built a verst or Italian half-mile away.¹³⁴ But she had always refused to do this, and being unable to resign herself to entering for life the very place from which, contrary to custom, she had been clever enough to escape, she preferred to think of retiring to Poland. When he

130 BN: '300'.

131 BN and NLB: 'Leonty Romanovich and Nepliuev' 1698 reads 'the boyar, the evanty (l'évanty) and Romanovich'.

132 Pustozersk (which roughly translated means 'barren lake') was situated on the estuary of the Pechora river where it enters the White Sea opposite Novaia Zemlia. Founded in 1499, its remoteness and the harshness of its climate made it an ideal place for a penal colony. Earlier famous detainees included Artamon Matveev. Neither Nepliuev nor Golitsyn reached Pustozersk. Golitsyn ended his days in Pinega in Archangel province.

133 BN and NLB: 'knouts and ...'.

134 BN and NLB: 'from the town' (i.e. Moscow). The New Convent of the Maidens (*Novodevichii monastyr'*) was founded by Tsar Vasily III in 1524 just a few miles to the south of the Kremlin on the Moscow river. Many of the nuns came from royal and noble families. The cathedral of Our Lady of Smolensk dates from the convent's foundation, but most of its churches and dwellings were commissioned by Sophia in the 1680s. Sophia remained in the convent until her death in 1704. In 1698 she was forced to take the veil and the name Susanna. See L.A.J. Hughes, *Sophia*, pp. 152–54. As explained earlier, Sophia had not previously been confined to a nunnery.

received news of this, Tsar Peter immediately sent orders to the commandant of the musketeers to take her to the convent by her own free will or by force, to guard all the exits and to prevent anyone from entering. After this was done, Tsar Peter two days later returned to Moscow, which he entered on horseback. The only remarkable thing about this was that his guard were the 1,800 armed musketeers. A quarter of an hour later, his wife and mother appeared in a coach, and they all went together to the palace. Tsar Ivan received his brother at the top of the staircase and they embraced. Tsar Peter asked Ivan for his friendship and was assured of it by the person who answered for him. After this everyone retired to their apartments, since when Ivan has only been mentioned at the top of decrees.

That was the end of Princess Sophia's regency. She had been mistress of the great empire of the Russians for some years. But she wanted, through overweening ambition, to assume completely the power which she exercised in her brothers' name, and stay independent. So she has been locked away for the rest of her days with the 800 nuns she had brought especially from Kiev in the hope of acquiring as many creatures as she could and because she thought that they would be truer to her interests than to those of her brother Peter.¹³⁵ They had only become his subjects in 1666 when the Palatinate and town of Kiev were ceded to the Muscovites by the Poles.¹³⁶ These good maidens are such in name only.

¹³⁵ A margin note in BN and NLB only reads: 'She had brought 800 nuns from Kiev to put in this convent because she thought ...'.

¹³⁶ The date 1666 is an error. Neuville is referring either to the Andrusovo treaty of 1667 between Russia and Poland, when Kiev was relinquished temporarily to Moscow, or to the 1686 treaty, one of the clauses of which ceded Kiev and its hinterland permanently to the tsar. There are no references in other sources to the 800 nuns from Kiev.

CHAPTER 7

The Causes of the Revolution

Having described Muscovite affairs at some length, it is relevant to demonstrate that the revolutions which took place in that State, and which might happen in the future, stem from all the intrigues of Princess Sophia. Her mind and her mettle do not mirror the deformity of her body. She is monstrously fat, has a head the size of a bushel, hair on her face, carbuncles on her legs, and is at least forty years old.¹³⁷ For all that she is short of stature, broad and fat, her mind is subtle, astute and political. Without having ever read Machiavelli nor absorbed what he has to teach, she knows all his maxims naturally, and above all the one which says that if you wish to rule you must shrink at nothing and be prepared to commit any crime.¹³⁸ If she had been content just to govern the State and had never planned to get rid of her brother Peter, no one would ever have dared to form a party in favour of the young prince and against her.

Towards the end of Fedor's reign, Princess Sophia, being possessed of all the qualities that we have just mentioned, foresaw that this prince would not live long as he was afflicted with sickness.¹³⁹ She sought to leave her convent contrary to the established custom by which the daughters of the tsar's house spent all their lives there without ever being allowed to marry.¹⁴⁰ With this in mind, she testified to feeling a very deep love for her brother and to an unimaginable tenderness towards him. She claimed to be touched by his good character, and complained aloud that she was heartbroken to be unable to see him, loving him as she did, and to perform herself all the little services one performs for a sick person about whose health one is worried. She constantly asked for news when he suffered bouts of the disease. Even when they were over, she lost no opportunity to show her affection for him, and the mortal pain she felt at not being in a position to, as she put it, do all the little favours one does for the people one loves. At last, after her adroit handling of the situation and preparing everyone for what she wanted to do, she left the convent on the pretext of coming to help him and to do what she could to comfort

137 The physical description of Sophia is in a marginal note of BN and NLB. See Introduction, pp. xxxi-xxxii. (Sophia was thirty-two years old in 1689.)

138 The last sentence is not in BN or NLB.

139 BN and NLB: 'epilepsy'.

140 See note 116 above, and introduction, p. xxxii.

him. Indeed she did so, allowing almost no one else to come near him nor give him his medicine. This capable princess thought that the more she did for him, the more she would win the prince's love and gratitude and, at the same time, the consideration and gratitude of all.

By her actions she insinuated herself into the thoughts of the powerful, for whom she showed much consideration and frankness, and also won the hearts of the people with her wheedling, making sure that both were pleased with her conduct. This made them used to seeing without displeasure something that they had never before witnessed. She should, it would seem, have been satisfied with the great success of the step she had taken in leaving the convent. But as she was of a mind never to return there, she felt that she had better protect herself against the fear of one day being forced to do so by making herself the absolute mistress.¹⁴¹ But such an ambitious plan could never succeed without a large party. She decided to form one and, after examining everyone's worth, deemed that there was no one more able to lead it than Prince Golitsyn.

As he is a man of great quality, and incontestably a descendant of the late dukes of Lithuania, the Jagellon house,¹⁴² the great lords at first seemed pleased enough with this choice, convincing themselves that he would be minister in name only and that they would share all power with him. But this prince, being cleverer on his own than the rest of Muscovy put together, had no difficulty in letting them live in hope, which worked well for him during the aftermath of Fedor's reign which, since it ended with a quite sudden death, gave Khovansky, a bold and very powerful man who was Golitsyn's sworn enemy, the chance to massacre all the great whom he esteemed capable of opposing the plan he had conceived to have himself declared tsar on the pretext of avenging his master, whom he claimed had been poisoned,¹⁴³ and punishing the guilty. But believing himself already assured of the throne, as may be seen at length in the chapter on 1682, and fearing no one, he was soon punished for his temerity and his cruelties.

The death of this rebel produced the effect which the princess had hoped for, since she obtained the regency for herself, as a result of which she

¹⁴¹ The passage after 'allowed to marry' is neither in BN nor NLB. They read instead: 'On the pretext of coming to the aid of the brother whom she professed greatly to love, she took advantage of the situation to insinuate herself into the minds of the powerful nobles, to win over the people by her wiles and to accustom both to seeing what they had never seen before.'

¹⁴² Neuville's estimation of Golitsyn here and elsewhere echoes Philippe Avril's: 'The Prime Minister, who came from the illustrious race of the Jagellons, was without doubt the most accomplished and enlightened lord in the whole Muscovite court. He liked foreigners and particularly the French, as his noble inclinations were very similar to those he had noticed in them.' Avril, Book IV, p. 293.

¹⁴³ BN: 'by the princess and her favourite'.

gave her favourite the office of great chancellor,¹⁴⁴ which he was able to use so well that there is not one other example of a subject of that country ever having exercised such authority.

Princess Sophia, seeing that she was in a position to do anything she wanted and in order to ease her conscience, wished to change the scandalous liaison she had had with her favourite into the sacrament of marriage. The difficulty lay in getting rid of Golitsyn's wife, which he could not resolve to do, being a naturally honourable man, added to which he had received great wealth from her and children who were dearer to him than those he had had with the princess, whom he only loved for her fortune.

However, as women are ingenious she managed to persuade him to make his wife become a nun,¹⁴⁵ through which the husband, according to the Muscovites' religion, upon demonstrating that he has a temperament which would not allow him to remain celibate, obtains permission to remarry from the Patriarch. This good lady having given in, the princess no longer doubted the success of her schemes.

The difficulty was to get Golitsyn to agree to the murder of the two tsars, to which she was absolutely committed, and through which she could imagine herself, her putative husband and their children assured of the Empire.

The prince, more capable and less enamoured than herself, explained to her how horrifying this plan was, and that its execution would inevitably earn them the hatred and indignation of all. Although that was hidden at the moment, it could one day erupt, giving some malcontent the chance to seize the throne on the pretext of avenging their deaths. She had already seen Khovansky use this excuse for his sedition, which might well have succeeded if she had not prevented it.¹⁴⁶ He made her agree to a more reasonable and, on the face of it, safer course, which was to make the tsar [Ivan] marry and, in order to compensate for his impotence, give his wife a lover whom she would accept for the good of the State and who would provide heirs. As soon as this prince had children, Tsar Peter would have neither friends nor creatures, in which case they would marry and, to make the marriage more acceptable to everyone, they would have Father Silvester, a Polish monk of the Greek religion, elected patriarch. He was a very able man, and would immediately propose an embassy to Rome to

¹⁴⁴ As noted earlier, Sophia was regent and Golitsyn director of the Foreign Chancellery several months before Khovansky's execution.

¹⁴⁵ This is untrue. Golitsyn's wife, Evdokia Ivanovna, accompanied her husband into exile in 1689, as Neuville actually says in the previous chapter. She was released after Golitsyn's death in 1714. Golitsyn's children by Sophia are not referred to in any other source. See Introduction, pp. xxxiii.

¹⁴⁶ From 'this plan was' to this point is neither in BN nor NLB.

arrange the reunification, the success of which would confer on them the esteem and approbation of the whole world. Then they would make Peter become a monk, or if that was impossible, they would still find a way to get rid of him in a safer and less odious way than she had suggested.¹⁴⁷ They would oblige Ivan to complain publicly of his wife's licentiousness, to prove that the children she had had were not his, which would be easy after all the measures they had themselves taken to ensure that she had them,¹⁴⁸ and to put her in a convent. After he had repudiated her, they would obtain permission for him to marry another with whom they could be certain he would have no children. By this means, which was not criminal, and without having to fear God's punishment, they would be masters of the State throughout the life of this wretch, and his heirs after his death, since there were no more males in the tsar's house.

The princess, finding this plan to her liking as well, willingly agreed to it and entrusted its successful execution to Golitsyn. She did not foresee that the prince had other designs than her own, for by reuniting Muscovy with the Church of Rome and hopefully outliving the princess he had no doubt that the Pope would agree that his legitimate son should inherit the Empire from him rather than one of the sons he had had with the princess during his wife's lifetime.

He therefore began by marrying off Ivan. The tsars never ally themselves with foreign countries, but order the most beautiful girls from all over Russia to be brought to the court. The girls are visited by the tsars' mothers, sisters and relations together with doctors and surgeons, after which they select from among the chosen the one they prefer. It was not difficult for Golitsyn to find one who would do and was suitable for his plans. He gave her an Italian surgeon as a lover. The lover soon gave her a child, but unfortunately it was a girl.¹⁴⁹ They had to console themselves and wait for better luck.

However, Peter's friends were well informed of this chicanery and wished to counteract it, but they did not feel themselves powerful enough to act, so they engaged another Prince [Boris] Golitsyn to join them, the former's cousin whom he despised because of his drunkenness, for this family does not have the slave status like the others. He insinuated himself so well into the young tsar's good graces that he became his favourite. Then, under the pretext of doing him honour, they obliged the elder Golitsyn to go and command the army a second time.

¹⁴⁷ From 'monk' to this point is neither in BN nor NLB.

¹⁴⁸ The last clause is neither in BN nor NLB.

¹⁴⁹ The legitimacy of Tsar Ivan and Tsaritsa Praskovia's (see note 120) five daughters, born between 1689 and 1694, has never been questioned. The first child was not born until five years after the marriage, by which time Peter's wife was already pregnant with their first child, which casts further doubt on Neuville's assertions.

During his absence Peter was married in spite of the princess.¹⁵⁰ This bold action swelled this prince's party. All the youngsters whose fathers had always claimed to follow the princess's party declared themselves for Peter.¹⁵¹

Upon his return, Golitsyn saw that his measures had been for nothing because of the young tsar's marriage and his wife's pregnancy, and so finally agreed to get rid of him. But the stroke having failed, as we saw in the chapter on 1687, he thought only of withdrawing, which he would have done but for the opposition of the princess who continually assured him that no one would dare challenge his authority. His scheme had always been to send his eldest son on an embassy to Poland with his younger brother, grandson and all his treasure, and then to go there himself if the plot did not have the success he hoped for. He hoped to make the king of Poland agree to protect him by promising to levy troops in his realm, with which he hoped to join forces with the Cossacks and Tatars and then together to achieve by force what he had failed to achieve by politics. It is quite probable that this plan would have succeeded, since he had many supporters in that country, but the princess could not bear to let him leave her sight and opposed his departure until the eve of his disgrace, when he could still have saved himself as he carried all the seals and since there are only forty German leagues from Moscow to the nearest town in Poland.

I am, however, convinced that he would have done this if he had followed the plan which I have just outlined in the way he intended. But he realised that Princess Sophia's violence and precipitousness had prevented this. So he preferred stoutly to await the final stroke of his disgrace and suffer death with the same resolve, rather than let his flight expose his family to whatever outrages his enemies' malice might dream up, and see himself, after such a great fortune, destitute and penniless, a poor fugitive in a foreign land.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Peter and Evdokia (see note 121, above) were actually married in January 1689, some time before Golitsyn left for the Crimea.

¹⁵¹ NLB leaves this sentence unfinished.

¹⁵² The last paragraph is neither in BN nor NLB.

CHAPTER 8

The Present State of Muscovy

As soon as Golitsyn had departed into exile, [Kirill] Naryshkin, Tsar Peter's grandfather on his mother's side, saw only one more obstacle to the plan he had devised to succeed the prince, which was to have the younger Golitsyn, Peter's favourite, disgraced.¹⁵³ This seemed all the more difficult to him as he had himself been the cause of his favour. However, as Peter and his favourite were not very capable,¹⁵⁴ this wily old politician soon found the way to make the favourite's immediate pleas that his cousin's life be spared appear suspect to his grandson, namely by insinuating that he had participated in all the elder Golitsyn's undertakings. But when the tsar explained how difficult it was to believe this of someone who had effectively saved his life three times, this kindly old gentleman and his daughter came with tears in their eyes to declare to Peter that if he did not dismiss his favourite he might as well recall the elder Golitsyn. An older and more capable prince might have been at least surprised, but on the spot he promised to send his favourite back to his estates, where this prince, having been warned, retired without awaiting orders.

No sooner had the tsar heard this than he sent messenger upon messenger to find out why he had withdrawn, to whom he merely replied that since his past conduct had not convinced His Majesty of his loyalty he would never set foot in the court again for the rest of his life. This so deeply touched Peter that he sent two boyars to visit him on his behalf, and a few days later, in his impatience to see him again, he sent two more to beg him to return, which he did immediately.

His return, together with the thousand embraces Peter gave him upon his arrival, so alarmed the Naryshkins and their party that they resolved to seek his friendship. His favour blossomed for several days thanks to the kindnesses he did his friends, but at last this prince, who had none of his cousin's merit, started to follow his maxims by having the great lords disgraced and their offices given to drunkards like himself. He soon fell into disgrace, for the opposing party, pretending that the princess's party was reviving, worked so hard on Peter that he finally resolved to give the

¹⁵³ See note 33 above.

¹⁵⁴ BN: 'were so stupid'. London 1699 adds 'being little read in Politicks'.

elder Golitsyn's office which his cousin had hoped to fill and which had until then only been exercised by a commission, to old [Kirill] Naryshkin, his mother's father.

This action, coming at a time when it was least expected, convinced everyone to follow the Naryshkin party, whose sons were soon enjoying the most important offices, and, among others, the eldest [Lev] that of great chamberlain,¹⁵⁵ which the younger Golitsyn had held. This caused the prince such annoyance that he could not stop himself expressing his resentment aloud by calling the tsar an imbecile. His enemies profited so greatly from his conduct that they convinced the tsar, whose only merit is cruelty, to exile his favourite with ignominy, and at present they are working to obtain the order to kill the two Golitsyns already in exile.

Those who most rejoiced at the elder Golitsyn's disgrace are today well aware of their loss, for the Naryshkins who now govern them are ignorant and brutal in equal measure and are starting, against the laws of politics and good sense, to destroy everything which that great man did with intelligence and sound judgement for the glory and advantage of the nation. They wish to distinguish themselves by taking on their former guise, which is as foul-smelling as it is black.

These brutes have begun by once more forbidding entry to their country to foreigners, and taking away virtually by force rights of religious expression from Catholics, of whom only the Polish envoy still has a chapel.¹⁵⁶ It is even thought that they will in the future force Muscovites only to know how to read and write, as before, making their government tyrannical and despotic in that as in other things. This will make everyone miss the great prince.

He had an extremely magnificent stone college built, brought from Greece twenty or so doctors and many fine books, exhorted the great to make their children study, allowed them to send them to Latin colleges in Poland, advised them to employ Polish governors for the remainder and given foreigners the right to enter and leave the realm, which had never been done before him.¹⁵⁷ He also encouraged the nobility of that country to travel and to learn the arts of war in foreign lands, for his plan was to have good soldiers instead of the legions of peasants whose land remains

¹⁵⁵ Lev Naryshkin actually took over the Chancellery of Foreign Affairs. When Peter was in Europe in 1697–98 foreign envoys to Moscow reported to him.

¹⁵⁶ Measures against foreigners, especially Catholics, tightening border security and limiting the activities of non-Orthodox churches, were indeed introduced at the end of 1689, but on the initiative of the patriarch rather than the Naryshkins. See Introduction, p. xxx.

¹⁵⁷ The Slavonic–Greek–Latin (later the Moscow) Academy was established in 1687. Its first directors were the Greeks Sofrony and Ioanniky Likhud. See Introduction, p. xvii. Golitsyn himself owned an impressive library.

uncultivated when they are led away to war, and instead of this useless service to the state, to impose a reasonable tax on each;¹⁵⁸ to keep ministers in the principal courts of Europe and to have liberty of conscience in his country.

He had already received Jesuits in Moscow with whom he often spoke and who were driven out straight after his disgrace with a declaration from the tsars to the king of Poland who had sent them that they would receive no more in their country.¹⁵⁹ This they have carried out, refusing the Polish envoy last March, 1690, the passage through their lands which he had requested in the name of his master and the Emperor for Father Grimaldy, who is now in Poland on behalf of the Emperor of China.¹⁶⁰

If I wished to write down everything which I have learned of this prince I would never be done. Suffice it to say that he wished to people the deserts, enrich the beggars, make men of savages, and turn shepherds' huts into palaces of stone, and that Muscovy has lost everything by the disgrace of this great minister.¹⁶¹ His own house is one of the most magnificent in Europe.¹⁶² It is roofed with copper, furnished with very rich tapestries and highly curious paintings. He also had one built for foreign ministers, which whetted the appetites of the great and the populace, for during his ministry more than 3,000 stone houses were built in Moscow. The reader will find this less surprising when he learns that this town has 500,000 inhabitants and is composed of three towns one

158 BN, NLB and 1698 have 'sur chaque teste' (on each head). London 1699 has 'on each house'. The former reading suggests that Golitsyn had in mind a poll tax to replace the household or hearth tax then levied, a reform which in fact was not implemented until the end of Peter's reign. The training of Russians abroad also started later, the first contingent of young nobles being dispatched in 1696. For a discussion of Golitsyn's alleged scheme for a regular army, see the Introduction, p.xvii.

159 One of these priests, the Bohemian Father Georgius David, left an account of his time in Moscow and of the expulsion of himself and his companion Father Tobias Tichavsky in October 1689. See *Status Modernus Magnae Russiae seu Moscoviae*, ed. A.V. Florovskij, The Hague, 1965. The Jesuits were in Moscow as a result of an agreement with the Emperor of Austria, not the King of Poland. On Neuville's relations with the Jesuits, see Introduction, pp.xxii-xxiii.

160 Claude-Philippe Grimaldy was a Jesuit and mathematician in the service of the Holy Roman Emperor. The Polish resident in Moscow requested free passage through Muscovy on his behalf in March 1690. Grimaldy got no further than Warsaw.

161 This clause is neither in BN nor NLB.

162 Neuville exaggerates. Golitsyn's brick mansion on Okhotny Riad, not far from the Kremlin, was built in the fashionable 'Moscow Baroque' style in the 1680s, together with matching chapel. Masonry construction became more common in Muscovy during the 1680s, as Neuville notes below, but most houses were still constructed of wood. Thus Golitsyn's house was impressive by Muscovite standards, but judging by surviving descriptions and photographs, modest in comparison with the grander stately homes and palaces of Western Europe. It was demolished in the 1930s in one of Stalin's road-widening schemes.

inside the other, each surrounded by a great wall and a moat full of water to prevent Tatar and Polish raids. The first is called Kremlin, the second Belgorod or white town and the third Novgorod or new town.

What the foreigner finds curious in this town is to see, in the month of December, 2,000 wooden houses on the ice¹⁶³ for merchants from the Orient and Europe.

Prince Golitsyn also had built on this river, which is called Moskva and which flows into the Oka, a stone bridge with twelve arches which is prodigiously high because of the floods. This is the only stone bridge in all Muscovy. A Polish monk was its architect.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ 1698 reads: 'two thousand wooden houses in the square'. The printer evidently misread 'place' for 'glace'.

¹⁶⁴ The Great Stone Bridge over the Moskva river was completed in 1687. The name of its architect is unknown.

CHAPTER 9

The Manners and Religion of the Muscovites

To tell the truth, the Muscovites are barbarians. They are suspicious and mistrustful, cruel, sodomites, gluttons, misers, beggars and cowards, and all are slaves except for the members of three foreign families, namely Prince Cherkassky,¹⁶⁵ formerly lord of the land of that name and who has enormous wealth, Golitsyn and Matveev. Besides all this they are extremely uncouth and even brutal. Without the Germans, who are in Moscow in large numbers, they could do nothing right. They are very dirty, although they bathe very often in places made for the purpose which are heated by ovens to such an extent that in the whole world there is only themselves who can bear it. Men and women are mixed in these places, which are usually built by water so that those who want to sweat can go and throw themselves in the cold water, in winter as well as summer. Although they are very robust, they feel the cold much more than the Poles do. They eat and drink extremely badly. Their food usually consists of cucumbers and Astrakhan melons which they preserve in the summer in water, flour and salt. They eat no veal because of a scruple which is too infamous to name, nor pigeon, because for them the Holy Spirit is represented by the image of a dove. The men are dressed more or less like the Poles; the rich ones in winter wear Dutch cloth edged with fine furs, and on their hats, when they can afford it, a few stones, though almost all of these are small pearls which are extremely common in that country. In summer they wear Chinese and Persian robes of silk and cloth.

The women dress in the Turkish fashion, and the vanity of even the poorest demands a more or less elaborate Persian fabric hat, according to their means. Those of the rich are decorated with pearls and stones. Their winter dress is like a Sultana's, gold cloth decorated with marten, and in summer Chinese damask. Their coiffure consists of showing no hair at all. They have great difficulty walking, their shoes being made in the form of sandals and fitting their feet like slippers. These women's folly is so extreme that they paint their faces, shave their eyebrows and make themselves whatever colour they please. They are very fond of

¹⁶⁵ The reference is probably to Prince Mikhail Alekukovich Cherkassky (?–1713), a close associate of Peter's. It is not clear why Neuville mentions him at this point.

foreigners, and not very scrupulous about ties of blood. They completely despise their husbands, who are only jealous of those men who do not give them presents.

The Muscovites love walking and go very fast. Their means of transport are lamentable. Most of them go through the town in summer on a broken-down horse always preceded on foot by their bareheaded servants. In the winter they harness this nag to a sled which is their only form of carriage. As far as the women are concerned, most of them only have a crude coach in the form of a litter, more often than not drawn by a single horse, in which five or six lie down without seats or cushions. Although there are between 500,000 and 600,000 inhabitants of Moscow, there are not 300 carriages, although there are more than 1,000 little horse-drawn carts which for a small consideration take the public from one place to another.

There are a few French-style coaches in Moscow, which the rich people have had sent from Holland and Danzig. The tsars' are very old because they will not buy new ones, in the hope of obtaining them as presents from foreign princes or ambassadors.¹⁶⁶ The best they have are made in the local fashion, some with doors and others in the form of litters. Their sleds are magnificent. The uncovered ones are of gilded wood, decorated all over the inside with velvet and large swags of braid. They are drawn by six horses whose harness is decorated with velvet like the sled. The covered ones are made in the form of coaches, with windows, decorated outside with cloth and inside with Siberian marten. They sleep there during their journeys which, because of such comforts, they almost always make in winter and at night.

When the tsars travel through the town in a coach or sled,¹⁶⁷ they change their best carriages and take different ones for the countryside.

The tsars have, around Moscow, a few wooden houses which they improperly call 'pleasure-houses', for they have neither gardens nor promenades.¹⁶⁸ They are only surrounded by walls, for fear of their being taken by the Poles or Tatars, which used to happen often fifty years ago.

¹⁶⁶ Marginal note in BN and NLB: 'They are also in great need of furniture.'

¹⁶⁷ BN: 'they only go very slowly. The musketeers line the streets along which they pass, and as in processions, men walk in front of them throwing water in summer, sand in winter. At the town gate they leave their best carriages and board different ones for the country.'

¹⁶⁸ Neuville is probably referring to the absence of formal ornamental gardens in the French style. Tsar Aleksei laid out vegetable gardens and orchards at several of his country estates, including Izmailovo and Kolomenskoe. Peter, in his turn, established gardens based on French and Dutch models in St Petersburg.

Tsar Peter is very tall and quite well proportioned, with a handsome face. His eyes are big but so wild that he is pitiful to look at. His head shakes continually. He is twenty years of age.¹⁶⁹ He amuses himself by making his favourites play tug o' war with each other, and often they knock each other out in their efforts to pay court. In the winter he has large holes cut in the ice and makes the fattest lords pass over them in sleds. The weakness of the new ice often causes them to fall in and drown. He also likes having the great bell rung, but his dominant passion is to see houses burn, which is a very common occurrence in Moscow since no one bothers to put one out unless there are 400 or 500 alight.¹⁷⁰ Each of these houses would hardly count as a pig's sty in Germany or France, and they can also be bought ready-made at the market. In 1688 3,000 were burned down, which, in truth, was no great loss.¹⁷¹ In four months of last year I saw three fires each of which consumed 500 or 600 houses. These fires are caused by the extreme frequency with which they get drunk and by their negligence in extinguishing the many burning candles which they put on the pictures in their rooms. They prepare for Lent by an equal number of days of carnival.¹⁷² During this period the disorder is so great that the foreigners staying in the suburbs hardly dare to leave and go into the town, because they fight each other like wild animals. They get drunk on vodka and other beverages that are so strong that only the Russians in the entire world can drink them. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that this makes them lose the little reason they are born with¹⁷³ and stab each other with large knives shaped like bayonets. In this country a man will kill his best friend if he thinks that he has stolen a kopeck, or a shilling, from him. To stop, or at least contain this disorder, they are content to reinforce the corps of guards, but the soldiers are so incompetent that they only ever arrive after the deed has been done. So long as they receive their share of the loot, the criminal is sure of getting away. Furthermore, no one in that country worries about people being murdered in the streets every day. They eat such an extraordinary amount at their meals that they are obliged to sleep for at least three hours after dinner and go to bed as soon as they have had supper, but to compensate they rise very late in the morning. They live in the same way in the army, and even the sentries take a siesta. In summer they strip naked at midday and

169 The physical description of Peter is in a marginal note to BN and NLB. Peter's tremor or tick is mentioned by several other writers. Peter was actually seventeen in 1689.

170 Peter's interest was in fire-fighting rather than arson. He regularly helped to extinguish fires throughout his life.

171 This clause is neither in BN nor NLB.

172 Neuville was not in Russia during the spring carnival season (*maslenitsa*), although he was there for the 'lent' or fast period preceding Christmas. His description of the riotous proceedings and the risks run by foreigners echoes Philippe Avril's (Book IV, p. 319).

173 This clause and the previous sentence are neither in BN nor NLB.

bathe. They sleep in this state. They cannot abide rain, which is moreover rare in that country.

They all wear close-fitting caps and when they meet each other they make the sign of the cross and shake hands. I think they do this to take God as a witness of their disloyalty, for bad faith is one of their virtues.

The religion of the Muscovites¹⁷⁴ is Greek, and may therefore be called highly schismatic. It is so marked¹⁷⁵ by frightful superstitions that their ignorance has introduced into it that they could pass for half-idolatrous. They have however retained the priesthood, for which they have only a superficial respect since they have no great scruples about mistreating their priests and their monks outside the church. They make no ceremony about this, other than taking off their caps before beating the priests with sticks, and putting them back on their heads again afterwards.¹⁷⁶

The patriarch of Moscow used to reside in Kiev, but since the Muscovites have been overlords of that town they have transferred his residence to Moscow.¹⁷⁷

The patriarch is normally chosen from among the metropolitans and confirmed by the tsar. He cannot be deposed as his predecessor was by those of Constantinople and Antioch who came¹⁷⁸ specifically for that purpose and at the tsar's expense during the reign of Fedor.¹⁷⁹ The one in office last year and who is now dead¹⁸⁰ was only elected because of the beauty of his beard. The patriarch and metropolitans only wear pontifical robes, and always travel with these accoutrements whether in a carriage or on horseback: their cross is carried before them by a servant, who like the others always goes bare-headed, for whatever the weather servants follow the custom of walking before their masters and never cover themselves. The difference between their mitres and those of our bishops

174 The following is a separate chapter in BN, entitled 'The Religion of the Muscovites'. It was omitted altogether from the Utrecht Dutch edition of 1707, perhaps because it duplicated a number of clichés about Orthodoxy. This is probably the most derivative section of Neuville's text and could have been taken from any of a number of sources.

175 BN: 'disfigured'.

176 This sentence is neither in BN nor NLB.

177 The patriarchate of Moscow was created in 1589. The patriarch of Moscow had never resided in Kiev, but the metropolitan of Kiev was the head of the Russian church until the rise of Moscow in the fourteenth century.

178 1698 mistakes 'vinrent' ('came') for 'mirent' ('aimed').

179 This must be a reference to the visit of the patriarchs in 1666–67, during the reign of Tsar Aleksei, not Fedor, to confirm the deposition of the disgraced Patriarch Nikon and the revision of service books and ritual.

180 Joachim (see note 49, above) died in March 1690. His successor was Patriarch Adrian, upon whose death in 1700 the patriarchate was suspended by Peter, and abolished in 1721.

is a decoration of little bells which extends all around. The prelates always carry in their hand a rosary which drags along the ground, and over which they babble continuously. Their main devotions consist of processions which are held with the following ceremonies. All the clergy dressed in rather splendid mitres, most of which are embroidered with pearls, leave a church in a body, but haphazardly and in no particular order and go to the one in which the devotions will take place. Each priest carries something in his hand. Some have books, others crosses and many pastoral rods. Those who walk with the metropolitan or patriarch carry paintings of the Virgin which are highly decorated with gold, silver, stones and pearl rosaries, and others big square crosses which are equally lavish, and so heavy that some are carried by four priests. Then there appear those who carry the Testaments, which are incontestably the most magnificent in Europe, for just one costs between 25 and 30,000 pounds. Among others, I have seen one which Tsar Peter had made by a French jeweller each side of which is ornamented with five emeralds the least of which is estimated at more than 10,000 pounds, and encased in four pounds of gold, for these gentlemen only value work when it is in very bad taste. After this whole retinue come the abbots followed by the metropolitans, and last of all some distance from them appears the patriarch with a hat studded with pearls which is made very much like the Pope's tiara, only without the three crowns, on his head. He should be supported by the tsars. But as the tsars have to be supported themselves in order to walk, they name great lords to do this in their place.

When such processions move, they are preceded by a hundred men, some carrying brooms and others great handfuls of sand to ensure the cleanliness of the path. This stems from the fact that before Golitsyn's ministry you could not help but walk with one foot in the mud, something which he remedied by having, instead of paving, of which there is none in that country, planks placed throughout the town, these having, since his disgrace, only been maintained on the main streets.

The Muscovites' whole devotions consist of attending the Mass which their priests normally begin at midnight. Although this is very long, no one sits down in church and they pray to God only in meditation, for most people cannot read or write and not one, starting with their priests, understands Greek. They have many feasts which they commemorate solely by a general ringing of bells which starts the day before and only finishes the day after at sunset, and they work indifferently throughout all the days of the year. They also have a great fondness for pilgrimages. Tsar Ivan, for all that he is paralytic, spends his whole life making them. However, there is no advantage for him in showing himself often in public. On the contrary, if he were well advised he would not leave the

palace, because he is horrible to behold and so ugly that it afflicts those who see him, even though he is still only twenty-eight years old.¹⁸¹

When they enter a house, they start by kissing the ground and crossing themselves and bowing many times before some image which should be in a certain place. Their priests are married, but they are not allowed to sleep with their wives on the eve of feast-days. As for bishops and abbots, they are obliged to remain celibate. When a Roman Catholic embraces their religion they baptise him all over again. He can, furthermore, if he is already married and his wife does not wish to convert, marry a different woman.

They observe three Lents a year. The first is ours, the second six weeks before Christmas and the third a fortnight before Lady Day in September.¹⁸² During these they eat only food in oil, which is incontestably, after themselves, the most foul-smelling thing on earth. This is what kills most of their soldiers, for the fish which they serve is dried in the sun and almost always rotten, causing terrible illnesses. Added to this their drink, which is made from flour and water only and is called *kvas*, cannot make this awful food digestible.

They also have a passion for building churches, and no lord ever builds a house without first erecting a chapel and, according to his means, establishing a greater or lesser number of monks in it. There are moreover 1,200 stone churches in Moscow with domes which make them very dark inside. All have five towers full of bells, on the top of which stand square crosses, the smallest of which is over three cubits high. The most magnificent are those of the Virgin and Saint Michael¹⁸³ which stand in the tsars' palace. Their domes and towers are covered with gilded copper and the crosses are vermillion. Inside, these churches are decorated with mosaics. Opposite them is a large tower in which there are several great bells, one of which is twenty feet in diameter and forty feet high. They were obliged to chisel away forty tons of metal in order to make it sound. It is normally only rung at Epiphany, which is the most solemn feast for the Muscovites, and it is only struck when the tsar goes to bed with the grand duchess so that the people may pray for the conception of a prince, for little value is attached to girls in that

¹⁸¹ BN and NLB have only a marginal note: 'He is horrible to behold. He is perhaps twenty-eight years old.' By the time the book was published Ivan was in fact dead (January 1696).

¹⁸² BN and NLB: 'in July'. The major feasts of Our Lady were Dormition (15 August) and Nativity (8 September), so either date is possible.

¹⁸³ The Kremlin Cathedrals of the Dormition of the Virgin and the Archangel Michael are decorated not with mosaics but with frescos. The tower is the belltower of Ivan the Great.

country.¹⁸⁴ Half of the Muscovite lands belong to monks because the Muscovites' most important devotion consists of building monasteries, several of which have over 100 monks who live very well and in perfect ignorance. There are also many for nuns, whose habit is to send the old ones to seek out any Armenian and European merchants who are ill-informed enough to let themselves be induced to visit them in the hope of profit on the pretext of buying some goods and then belabour them after robbing them of most of their possessions.

All sorts of religions are permitted in Muscovy except for Catholicism, which they regard as the only good one besides their own.¹⁸⁵ If a foreigner of whatever religion enters one of their churches they force him to become a Russian, because in the past those who entered used to mock their ceremonies and their singing, which is reminiscent of a tune sung by a mute.

¹⁸⁴ Neuville's description of the bell is a direct quotation from Avril. But Avril says that the bell was struck at Epiphany and for royal weddings (Book IV, p. 320).

¹⁸⁵ Foreign Catholics in Moscow were allowed to practice their religion in makeshift chapels in their own homes, but were not permitted to build a church until 1696. Jesuits, as we have seen, were regarded with great suspicion. The more numerous Protestants, mainly Lutherans and Calvinists, were treated more tolerantly; they had their own churches in the Foreign Quarter.

CHAPTER 10

Conversations with Spafarius on the Journey to and Trade with China

It is a very long time since the fur trade was established in Muscovy, but it was very different then from what it is now. In former times they did not know of the Siberian marten, and only ordinary furs were used, except for ermine which they used to trade for commodities. The present tsars' ancestor was called Ivan Vasil'evich¹⁸⁶ but known as the Tyrant. The reader will not be surprised that he was given this name, and rightly so, when he learns that his barbarous cruelty reached such heights that taking men's lives filled him with merriment.¹⁸⁷ One day, to amuse himself, he even forced his coachman to take the coach carrying his wife across a half-frozen pond which is still to be seen a quarter of a league from Moscow and in which she perished along with everything else. Having conquered the kingdoms of Astrakhan and Kazan,¹⁸⁸ he at last discovered part of that vast land called Siberia, which means 'prison' in the Slavonic language,¹⁸⁹ for this naturally cruel prince dispatched to these formerly nameless lands those whom he had disgraced. It is to the latter that we owe the Siberian marten and also a route to China. They found it by penetrating further and further into those vast deserts, full of chasms, impenetrable and unmapped forests which, by all appearances, stretch right to the polar sea, in pursuit of these animals, and the black foxes, lynxes and other wild beasts, with which all those uninhabited forests are filled and whose furs are so prized and sought after.¹⁹⁰

After the Tyrant's death, the son who succeeded him sought a way to profit from his power by allowing foreign merchants entry to his country.¹⁹¹ The Dutch were the first to venture into the Sea of Muscovy,

¹⁸⁶ Ivan IV, the Terrible (reigned 1533–84). Both BN and 1698 have Vasily Vasil'evich ('Bazile Bazilewich'). The story which Neuville tells about Ivan's treatment of his wife (he had six) is a legend.

¹⁸⁷ This sentence is neither in BN nor NLB.

¹⁸⁸ BN and NLB have, incorrectly, Riazan'. Ivan conquered Kazan in 1552, Astrakhan in 1556.

¹⁸⁹ Contrast with Avril, who writes (correctly) of 'Siberia, from the word *sibir*, which in the Slavonic language means "northern"' (Book II, p. 167).

¹⁹⁰ BN and NLB have only: 'penetrating into that land in search of these animals'.

¹⁹¹ Neuville's chronology is muddled. English merchants were the first to establish trade with Russia, following the arrival of Richard Chancellor at Archangel in

but they failed to make much progress. The English proved more fortunate and reached Archangel, a port located on the Sea or Gulf of St Nicholas. When the tsar was informed of this, he granted them extensive privileges to induce them to establish trade there, namely the right to pay no import or export duties. The Dutch, jealous of this breakthrough by others than themselves, tried to use the same route but the tsar, fearing that competition would delay the very thing he wished to encourage, refused to allow the Dutch to enter the port. The English remained in control of trade with that country right up to the death of Charles I, king of Great Britain. When he heard of this, the prince, for all that he was a barbarian, took all their privileges away from them for political reasons, which he passed off as punishment for the violence done to the king's person,¹⁹² and allowed the Dutch to enter the port on condition that they pay fifteen per cent on imports and exports.

The port has grown to such an extent that it now has over 200 traders, most of whom spend the winter in Moscow because of the excessive cold up there. It is since this time that money has appeared in Muscovy in amounts as large as in Poland, for in a suburb of Moscow there are over a thousand English, Dutch, Hamburger, Flemish and Italian merchants.¹⁹³ The merchants deal in Russian leather and caviar, which is the eggs of sturgeon. These are put in slabs as thick as your finger and the size of the palm of your hand, salted and dried in the sun. This is a commodity with a very large market, because an unbelievable number of these fish are caught at the mouth of the Volga and the other rivers that flow into the Caspian Sea. They are brought back upstream to Moscow, and from there are distributed throughout Muscovy and the neighbouring countries. The same is done with herring, which is of great comfort to the Muscovites during the three Lents that they strictly observe.¹⁹⁴

The English and Dutch trade their cloths and spices for grain, hemp, rosin potash, which is used for dyeing, and cinders, while the Flemings and Hamburgers take away wax and iron. Ships from these and other nations arrive in Archangel in the month of July and leave in September. Any who wait longer are placing their lives in great danger. The journey from Bergen to Archangel usually takes fifteen to twenty days, as does the return trip. The trade is very considerable, although no more than thirty ships a year enter this port.

1553, i.e., during Ivan IV's reign. Commerce increased during the reigns of Ivan's son Fedor I (1584–98) and Boris Godunov (1598–1605).

192 English merchants were expelled from Moscow in 1649.

193 BN includes Scots in the list. On the Foreign Quarter or Suburb, see note 55 above.

194 The last four sentences are neither in BN nor NLB, which read only: 'the eggs of sturgeon caught in the Caspian Sea and brought up the Volga to Moscow'.

The Persians formerly took their merchandise to Archangel, but Golitsyn allowed them to take them straight to Riga, paying in Moscow the fifteen per cent that they used to pay in three different towns. That is to say, five per cent in each, on the way to Archangel. He saved them an entire year, the return journey from Riga to Holland taking four months and from Riga to Isfahan three. These merchants cross the Caspian Sea at the end of October and reach Moscow in sleds provided at the tsar's expense in five weeks. They return down the Volga in thirty to forty days.

The Dutch obtained permission from Golitsyn to send carpenters and pilots from their country to Astrakhan, and there they built two frigates to make the crossing of the Caspian Sea to Chemakay, the nearest Persian town, very easy. The Tatars having however burned them eighteen months ago, the present ministers will allow no more to be built.¹⁹⁵ This will prove very dangerous, for the Muscovite craft are nothing more than large boats with two rudders and a sail which is lowered as soon as the wind is no longer aft, in which eventuality they let the vessel go wherever the wind takes it. As Golitsyn's object was to place his country on the same footing as all the others, he called for reports to be sent on all the states of Europe and their governments. He wanted to start by freeing the peasants and giving them the land which they cultivate on the tsar's behalf in return for payment of an annual tribute which, by his calculations, would have increased these princes' revenues by more than half.¹⁹⁶ Their income hardly amounts to seven or eight million crowns in French money. As the remainder is in the form of commodities, it is difficult to calculate its exact value. Golitsyn wished to do the same with taverns and with other goods and trades in the belief that this procedure would make the people hard-working and industrious in their desire to become rich.

Golitsyn made no changes that affected the hunting of Siberian marten. This is done by criminals confined there in the same way that they would be sent to the galleys in France,¹⁹⁷ and by soldiers who are sent to that place in regiments each commanded by a colonel and usually stay there for seven years. Both are required to deliver every week a certain quantity of furs, on which they are taxed. They must take great care not to pierce the pelts and not to stain the furs with blood, especially those of the Siberian marten, as it is claimed that they are not so good in that condition. This would earn the soldiers a beating. To avoid it, they fire a

¹⁹⁵ This story seems to relate to Dutch-built ships, the 'Eagle' and its companion, burnt on the Caspian not eighteen months but eighteen *years* earlier by the Cossack rebel Stenka Razin in 1671. The claim that the 'present ministers' forbade the building of ships is a fabrication.

¹⁹⁶ On Golitsyn's project to free the peasants, for which Neuville is the only source, see Introduction, p.xvii.

¹⁹⁷ The reference to criminals is neither in BN nor NLB.

single ball at the head, at which they are almost all quite adept. In Muscovy, they only know how to use lead shot.¹⁹⁸ As the hunt's success depends on great assiduity and patience, officers are allowed to reward their soldiers and share with them the surplus left over from what they are obliged to kill each week for the tsar. This makes the work very profitable, for a colonel can earn 4,000 pounds from his seven years of service, and a subaltern proportionately less. A soldier never earns more than 600 to 700 pounds. It is vital to have good friends, for all a gentleman in Moscow has to his name is 1,000 pounds a year, half of which is paid in Siberian marten, usually valued more than¹⁹⁹ they are worth. A colonel is paid 400 pounds, and subalterns proportionately less. Golitsyn's plan to benefit both tsars and officers was for the State to pay all its debts in cash. This was to be accomplished by sending trusted representatives with all the furs and marten, which are not in short supply in Muscovy, to sell in foreign countries or to exchange for goods needed in Muscovy or to sell with the profits going to the tsars. What he did to establish a trade route to China through Siberia and Muscovite Tatarry deserves to be described in detail.

Spafarius, a Wallachian by birth, was driven from his own country after having the end of his nose cut off because he had revealed to the Great Lord a secret treaty which the Hospodars of Wallachia, his relatives, had made with the king of Poland, which caused the overthrow of the Hospodar who is presently at the king of Poland's court, reduced to living off a pension. He first took refuge with the elector of Brandenburg, who welcomed him because he was very intelligent and spoke Latin, Greek and Italian perfectly.²⁰⁰ But when the king of Poland informed my lord the elector of his infidelity, he was immediately driven from court. Not knowing where to turn, he ended up in Muscovy. Golitsyn received him most warmly and gave him enough to live on.²⁰¹ A while later he sent him to China on the tsars' behalf,²⁰² to find the means to establish an overland trade route through Muscovy to that country. The journey took two years and proved very difficult, but as he is extremely clever, he took

198 The passage after 'seven years' does not appear in BN or NLB. These read: 'Every week a Colonel takes a number of soldiers out to look for these animals on the small islands where they hide. Two years ago most of these crossed to an island owned by the Chinese, which has diminished the Tsars' revenue by more than 200,000 pounds. They kill the animals with a sort of crossbow and not with firearms for fear of piercing their skin.' This paragraph is an almost literal quotation of Avril's description of the hunt. See Avril (Book II, pp. 168–69).

199 BN: 'twice what they are worth'.

200 The last clause is not in BN.

201 It is unlikely that Golitsyn was Spafarius's benefactor when Spafarius first arrived in Muscovy in 1671. By the time he returned from his mission to Peking in 1675–78, however, Golitsyn was already influential at court.

202 BN and NLB: 'ostensibly to conclude a peace treaty with the Chinese (the two nations are always at war without one ever managing to defeat the other), but actually ...'.

such careful note of the terrain through which he passed that upon his return he gave Golitsyn reason to hope that on a second journey he could arrange things so that it would be as easy to go to that country as to any other.

With these assurances, Golitsyn began looking for a route for the transportation of goods that would be both convenient and short. When he found it, he concentrated on a means of establishing staging-posts, which was to build at intervals of ten leagues from Moscow to Tobol'sk, the capital of Siberia, clusters of wooden houses and to fill them with peasants to whom plots of the surrounding land would be given on the one condition that they should keep three horses at each house, these being given to them at the outset together with the right to charge those people who go to Siberia and back on business three shillings per horse for every ten versts, or two German leagues, travelled. On this road, like everywhere else in Muscovy, he had posts set to show the versts and the way, and in those places where the snow is so deep that the road is impassable he founded settlements for people condemned to exile for life, to whom he gave money and provisions as well as great hounds to pull the sleds across the snow in place of horses. At Tobol'sk, a town situated on the great river Irtysh, which is improperly called Ob' because that is the river into which it flows, he established large storehouses full of provisions and had big barges built to take the caravans upstream as far as Kisilbas, a lake at the foot of the Pragog mountains,²⁰³ where he also established all the facilities necessary for the continuation of the journey.

Spafarius assured me that his latest journey took only five months, and that he had travelled as comfortably as in Europe. I would very much have liked him to have given me all the details of it, and to have learned from him the names of the rivers, mountains and lands through which he passed. But I found him very circumspect and reserved on all the questions I put to him.²⁰⁴ I well understood that if he refused to satisfy my curiosity, it was only for fear of someone doing him a bad turn if it became known that he had revealed to me something that they want to remain hidden and unknown to all the other nations. The kindness he might have shown me by telling me all I wanted to know could have earned him a beating on the tsars' orders. When the mood takes them, the tsars exempt no one from punishment, whatever their rank or position, from the humblest peasant to the boyars. Spafarius hoped, from what he

²⁰³ BN: 'Magog mountains'. Neuville is right insofar as Tobolsk lies at the confluence of the Irtysh and Tobol rivers, which flow into the Ob' further north. Lake Kisilbas is probably Lake Zaisan, which lies at the southern end of the Irtysh at the foot of the Altay mountains.

²⁰⁴ A brief description of Spafarius's route (and four alternative routes to China) had already been published in 1691 by Avril (Book II, pp. 173–74), who claimed to have made use of Polish copies of Russian official records.

gave me to understand, to find a still shorter and easier route in a further journey which he intended to make.²⁰⁵

However, the Dutch continued to show the same jealousy which they naturally have towards their neighbours and which they have proved in all their settlements in the Orient, since their plan is, if they can manage it, to have to themselves all world trade to the exclusion of the other nations.²⁰⁶ Fearing that the convenience of this route would give the French the idea of making the journey by land, they protested so much after Golitsyn's fall that they forced the Muscovites to deny this route to all foreign merchants.

They did this for fear that if the route once became known and was easy to travel, the French might make the journey, taking to those countries all their best works, which the Chinese and Tatars prize highly, returning with the richest and most precious merchandise. This might afterwards prejudice the Dutch trade around the Cape of Good Hope to Batavia, Malacca and the other places in the Orient of which they have made themselves the masters by driving out the Portuguese and the English. They saw how useful the route would be, if it were once established and made safe. Foreign merchants would much rather use it than expose themselves every day to the storms, illnesses and all the hazards of the sea, not counting the years it takes to make the voyage. In this way, a very considerable trade could be created. The Dutch have no need to fear the Muscovites on this score, knowing them well and realising that they have too little intelligence ever to create a trade that amounts to anything.²⁰⁷ They also know that the Muscovites are too poor to buy the rich merchandise of those realms and can only bring back trinkets such as odds and ends of silk cloth, tea, little wooden vases and similar small wares and baubles. So they have nothing to fear from the Muscovites, who can neither at present nor in the future harm them or prejudice their dealings.²⁰⁸

A few years later,²⁰⁹ the king of Poland protested through his minister at that court about the decree, which is quite contrary to the treaty of 1686 by which his subjects are specifically permitted to come and go by that route. He received no response, other than that the tsars had ordered it thus. They made the same reply to the king of Sweden whose

205 From 'Europe' to this point does not appear in BN. This is the second comment on Spafarius' unwillingness to disclose information that does not appear in the manuscript. The first is on p.14.

206 This diatribe against the Dutch is neither in BN nor NLB. This is a clear example of the addition of material deemed pleasing to the king of France.

207 The paragraph up to this point is neither in BN nor NLB.

208 This sentence is neither in BN nor NLB.

209 The last clause is neither in BN nor NLB.

ambassador, Fabricius,²¹⁰ made a similar treaty in favour of universal peace with them concerning trade with Persia. They think they are putting themselves out by allowing the Polish envoys, whom they provide with transport as far as Astrakhan, to reach Persia by passing through their territory. The king of Poland had this condition inserted in the treaty of 1686 at the request of the Jesuits who hoped to go to China by this route. However, Golitsyn, all-powerful as he was, could not obtain permission to do so for those Count Siry, the Polish envoy to Persia, brought with him to Moscow in 1688 with orders from his master the king to aid them in their journey to China. The Dutch envoy residing in Moscow, being true to the spirit of his nation, prevented this in secret²¹¹ by informing the Muscovites that among the twelve Polish Jesuits there were Fathers Avril and Beauvollier²¹² who were French by birth, and that the Most Christian Monarch had sent them to that country in order to spy out the route. This made those savages decide to tell the Polish envoy that he could take these subjects of his master with him on the journey to Persia, but as for the Frenchmen whose king had just insulted the tsars' ambassadors, they could do no more for them than to send them back the way they had come. On their return, the king of Poland, out of consideration for the king, saw them safely conveyed to Constantinople. Nevertheless, it seems that after the next peace, which will be as glorious for the king or indeed more so than previous ones, he will be able to force this nation to allow his subjects to trade with that country through their territory.

The End

210 BN and NLB: 'Sabrierus'. Ludwig Fabricius passed through Moscow early in 1687 on his way back from Persia to Sweden. He was in Russia again in August 1697 en route for Persia, when he brought a letter from the new king Charles XII.

211 BN and NLB have only: 'The Dutch envoy informed ...'. On Keller, see above, note 10. Avril and Beauvollier actually arrived in Moscow in January 1689.

212 BN incorrectly has 'Beauvollaïs'. Neuville, as we have seen, borrowed passages from Avril's account of his journey.

EXTRACT FROM THE ROYAL LICENCE

By the king's favour and licence, given at Paris on the sixteenth day of August 1697, signed Noblet and sealed with the great seal of yellow wax, it is permitted to Pierre Aubouin, incorporated, bookseller and printer to their highnesses the children of France, to print a book entitled *Curious and New Account of Muscovy*, for the period of eight consecutive years, to start from the date of the completion of the first edition. All booksellers and printers are forbidden to counterfeit it, or even to sell foreign editions of it, under pain of confiscation of the counterfeit copies and a fine of 3,000 pounds together with all costs, damages and interest charges.

The aforementioned Mr Aubouin shares his rights under the licence with Charles Clouzier.

Registered in the book of the community of Paris booksellers and printers on 28 September 1697.

Signed P. Aubouin, (incorporated)

First printing completed on 5 October 1697.

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